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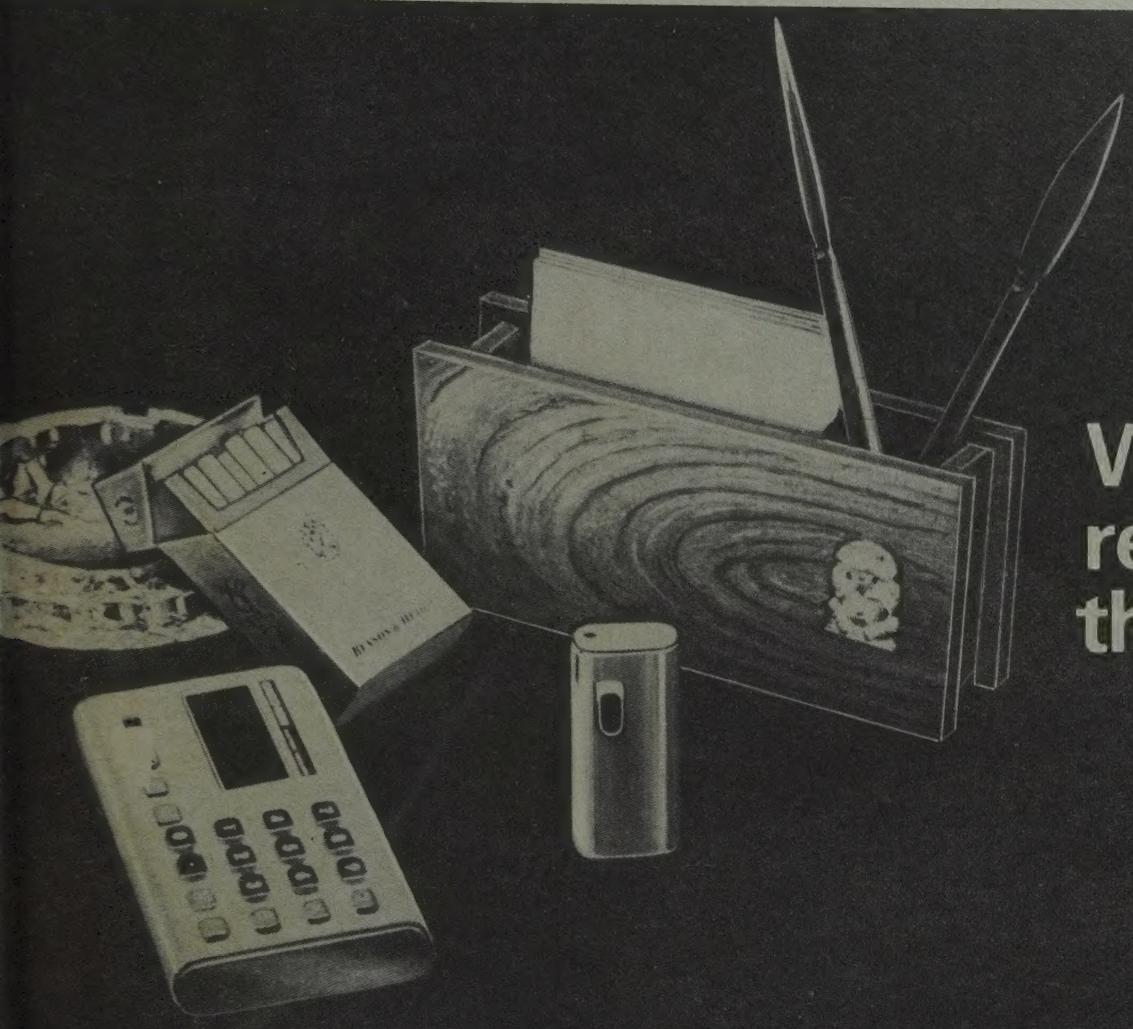

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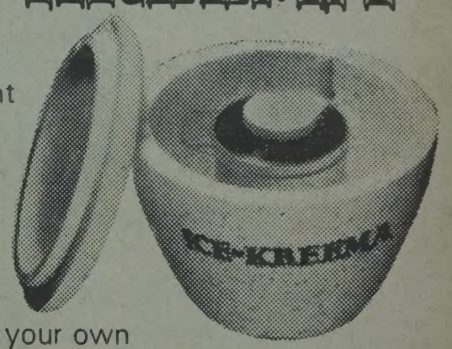

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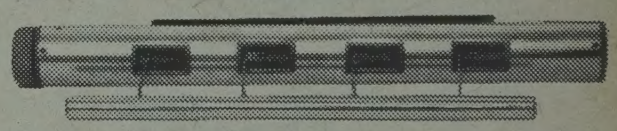

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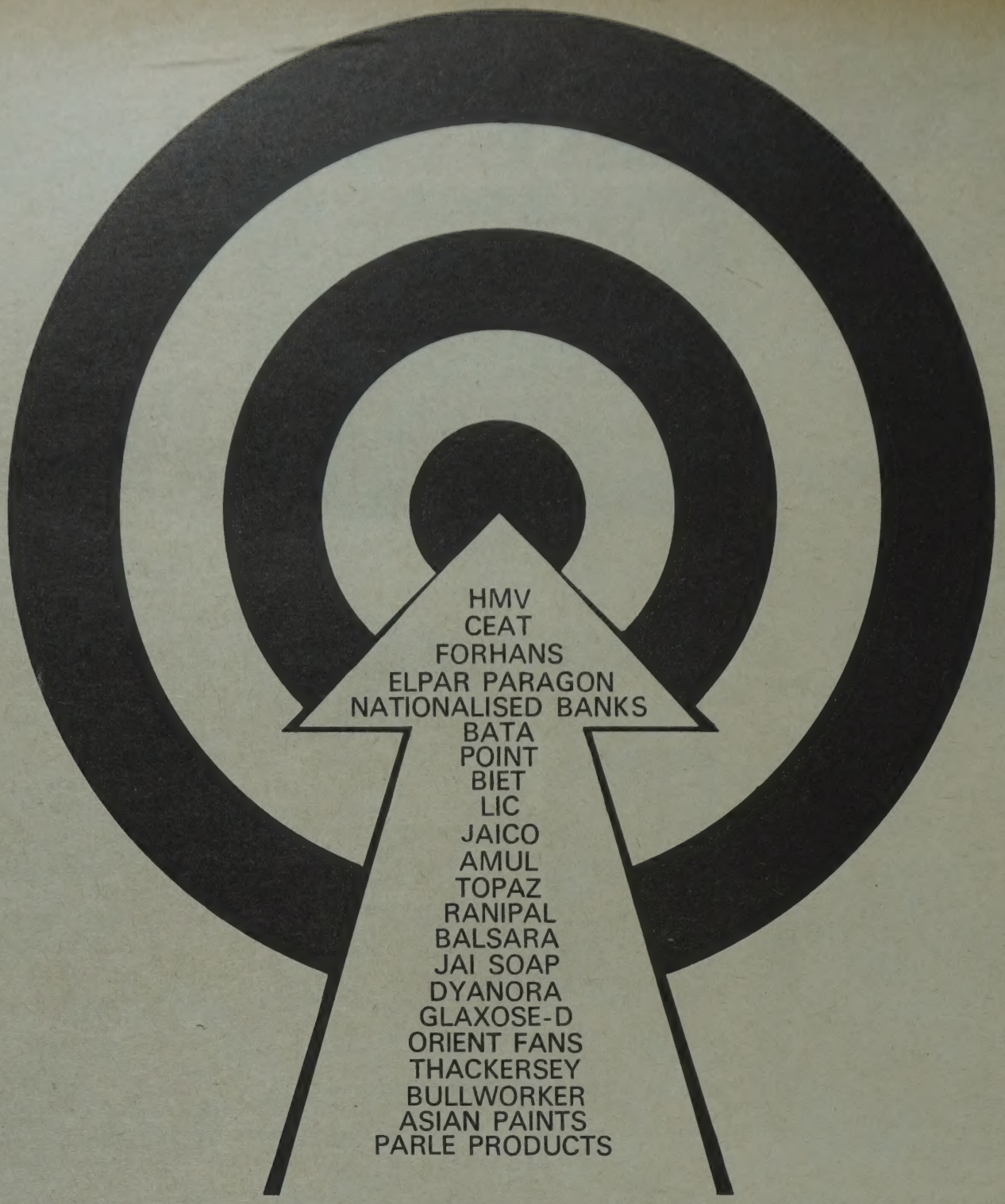

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SHOBHANA MEHTA

Weeks ahead of the actual dates, the excitement is on — brightly decorated shops tempt you with special discounts, hundreds of stalls spring up to offer you a wide variety of fireworks and the noise of crackers fills the air, the card shops put on prominent display special greeting cards, plans are made for elaborate decorations, and everyone exchanges invitations to "teen patti" sessions. Diwali is a special time.

Our cover this week features Shobhana Mehta with a lovely rangoli design — an integral part of Diwali — done by her. A versatile girl with many interests, including social work Shobhana is very good at handicrafts and, in fact, runs classes in arts and crafts.

Inside, you will find a special Diwali fashion feature, recipes for Diwali sweets and a controversial article on the deification of Ram.

Photograph : Farokh Reporter

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this week

THE RAMAYANA REVISITED

In a rather radical departure from traditional interpretations of the Ramayana and its characters, Ram's credentials as one deserving admiration, emulation and, above all, worship, are called into question. Readers are invited to send in their considered reactions to this controversial article, which is presented as an interesting and different viewpoint.

Page 11.

WEAVING THEIR WAY TO A BETTER FUTURE

While much of the weaving in the country is traditionally done by menfolk, with women sometimes putting in some work to relieve the men, there are areas where women are the main weavers.

Maheshwar is one such place, where women are working towards a financially secure future.

Page 29.

GRAN'S BEST FRIEND

A walk down nostalgia lane and a tribute to everyone's best friend — the mongrel or, more correctly, the mixed-breed.

Page 45.

DOCTOR ON WHEELS

Dr. Mary Verghese, formerly of the Christian Medical College and Hospital, Vellore, is well-known both in India and abroad for the courage with which she faced the physical handicap that was the legacy of a car accident and the way in which she rose above herself and reached a helping hand out to others in distress.

Page 21.

ALSO

A colourful blanket for your baby — **Page 23** Instructions for paper pattern — **Page 22** Female incursion into an all-male dance — **Page 42** Film Interview : Smita Patil — **Page 47** Special Diwali Recipes — **Page 35.** Special Diwali Fashion — **Page 30.**

REGULAR FEATURES

Your Page/**9**, Comics/**15**, Story/**17**, News Bulletin/**19**, Short Story/**22**, Beauty/**25**, Fashion/**26**, Passing Through/**41**, True Confession/**49**, Hiya Honey/**53**, Frankly Speaking/**53**, People and Events/**54**, Horoscope/**56**.

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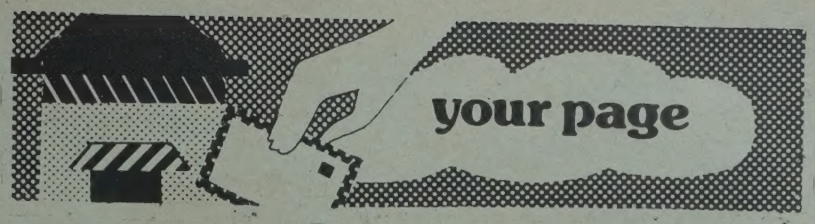

1st prize

CHASTITY NORMS

It is high time that we take a deeper, broader and more liberal look at the term 'chastity'. A woman should be deemed to have lost her chastity only when she voluntarily yields to someone other than her husband. By this definition, a rape victim will not be deemed to have lost her chastity. This may sound quite radical, and the stick-in-the mud, die-hards are bound to raise Cain and even dub it as heresy or blasphemy. But we should ignore or slience them and march on towards social reform and social justice. We should stir out of our cosy cocoons and learn to look at things with a clear and detached perspective.

Chastity should be a state of the mind. It is the mind alone which is responsible for good or bad. The body by itself is incapable of good or bad. then, why should a poor rape victim, whose mind is pure, be penalised when her body has been violated against her will? Many rapists are allowed to go scot-free because their victims do not want to testify against them for fear of social exposure and subsequent public censure. This is happening even in the Western countries where people are supposed to have more liberal ideas. No one should be permitted to stick a label of stigma on a rape victim. There should be a national, nay, an international awakening in this regard. Then and only then, will rape cease to be a crime where the victim is punished.

C. Raghunathan, Madras

And even if a woman has voluntarily slept with a man, whose business is it to call her "un-chaste"? What is chastity, anyway? How come it is something relating only to a woman, and held out to men as some prize plum? If you feel chastity is something you can divide into compartments, if you believe one has lost it because she "did wrong" and the other one has not really lost it because she was forced into an act — then the whole case seems pretty hopeless...

2nd prize

SINNER WHEELS?

I am a staunch upholder of the liberation of the weaker sex from the stranglehold of male domination — particularly in our country where their enslavement is due to hidebound customs, and traditions. Yet, very often, the so-called liberated and educated women themselves are blithely witness to their own degradation.

Take for instance, The Inner Wheel Clubs, which are purely Women's organisations and independent bodies and have nothing to do with Rotary International — which is purely a Men's organisation. These Clubs are tolerated by the Rotary in India and a few other countries, but in the US and elsewhere they are wantonly ignored. Yet, in their constitution, the Women of the Inner Wheel stipulate that for admission into their organisation, " a woman must be the wife of a Rotarian or an Unmarried Sister of a Rotarian." While the widow of a Rotarian is permitted to retain her membership if her husband dies, the unmarried Sister must resign her membership if she gets married to a non-Rotarian. Why should the so-called enlightened ladies tag on to the Men's organisations, where they are neither wanted nor recognised, and yet shout that they want to be liberated. It is high time they got rid of this hang-over.

A. M. Varadarajan, Bangalore

You seem to be bending over backwards in your staunch support of women! The Rotarians are rich and influential, and if their wives band together to use wealth and influence to promote good causes and eliminate some misery, where is the harm?

3rd prize

TURNED TABLES

Recently an acquaintance of mine divorced her husband because he could not give her any mental companionship. All those who heard this were shocked. An Indian girl divorcing her husband on such flimsy grounds! "Is mental companionship all that important", such people ask. Yet, the very same people seem to realise how important it is when a man divorces his wife for the same reason. After all an uneducated and unsympathetic wife ruins a man's life, they argue.

A woman's life, of course, has no such value.

Miss Ruby Mehta, Lucknow Cantt.

Ah yes, a woman cannot, must not, indulge in such frivolous exercises. After all if he is capable of "doing sex" and giving her a baby; if he is earning and "maintaining" her, what more does she want, silly girl?

BUS WARS!

The Chairman of the BEST Committee has appealed to bus commuters to offer their seats to the old and infirm and to women travellers, according to a recent news item. The Chairman is evidently a chivalrous fellow. But let's face facts. Except for pregnant women, women with babies in their arms and those who can be included among the old and infirm, the ladies don't really need this kind of gallantry. The only other exception could be when the bus is packed and a woman is embarrassed at being sandwiched between two or more men or when the men are deliberately taking liberties with her person.

In fact, I see no reason why women shouldn't give up their seats to men, if the situation warrants it! When that day dawns, when such an attitude is an accepted way of life, then will women have achieved true equality.

P. Chandrayani, Bombay

We agree only with the earlier part of your letter where you say women don't need this kind of gallantry. Other than that, why should a woman be embarrassed standing between two men? If a man is bold enough to lay a hand on her breast she should be bold enough to kick him where it will hurt the most.

READER'S VOICE

ASTROLOGY: AN ABSURDITY?

Astrology as understood and developed in the past cannot be classified as a scientific study, or even as a normative science, where definite conclusions cannot be arrived at by following three existing methods of reasoning — deductive, inductive and analogical. The basic concepts in astrology were incorrect — for example, assuming time as absolute, and the sun and the moon as planets. However, the relevance of astrology cannot be dismissed casually. It often goes to help, psychologically, desperate souls who have lost hopes of good things in life. If not exploited by clever men it can stay amidst us for therapeutic reasons. (A. Srinivasan Murthy, Bangalore)

* * *

If astrology is not defined and recast along scientific lines and is accepted in its present crude form it does more harm than good. I have seen hundreds of marriages broken down and unconsummated as a result of certain ominous indications in the girl's horoscope. Many good marriages have not taken place because of this belief, even in the case of educated young men, which is really a shameful thing. All marriages are solemnised at good muhurtham but why then do young girls become widows? Is not horoscope reading an absurd system? (Rathna Murthy, Bangalore)

CORRESPONDENCE COURSES

This is to clarify some facts about the correspondence course I offer in Industrial Relations and Labour Laws, about which I have received many queries since it was mentioned in a Reader's Voice letter written in reference to your article on correspondence courses (June 24). The course, which is of two months' duration , costs Rs. 150 and not Rs. 100. Concession to unemployed is 75 per cent of the total fees. Besides this, two more courses are available. A one-month English correspondence course (strictly for women), fees Rs. 65, and a six-week salesmanship course, fees Rs. 100. Would-be students should send a complete application, with a draft towards the relevant fees. In 1979 I won't be available for these courses.

R. K. Rekriwal, Kanpur

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THE RAMAYANA REVISITED

As a departure from traditional interpretations of the Ramayana and its characters, this is a rather controversial viewpoint. Readers are welcome to send in their reactions, the best of which will be published in a subsequent issue.

Jyoti Punwani

LEFT: The wedding of Ram and Sita — one of the favourite subjects of contemporary popular iconography.

Isn't it time we stopped worshipping Ram as a God and stopped celebrating Diwali as the triumph of Good over Evil? Neither Ram nor Ravan embody any of the two extremes of Good or Evil; unless we resort to the very convenient explanation that Ram was an incarnation of Vishnu created to destroy evil in the world, and thus everything he does is good.

What are the godly virtues of Ram that inspire worship? His behaviour throughout the Ramayana is that of an ordinary human being. He has neither extraordinary tolerance and understanding nor extraordinary compassion and wisdom. His attitude towards women, especially, is disgusting and is first revealed in his behaviour with Shurpanakha.

Ravan's sister, Shurpanakha, is attracted by Ram's good looks, proposes to him, and threatens to kill Sita if necessary.

We can understand Ram's anger at this forthright proposal but not his cruelty. His behaviour is despicable even by modern 'depraved' standards. He first ridicules her by offering her Laxman instead of himself then, not satisfied with mocking at her, he deliberately gets Laxman to disfigure her by cutting off her nose and ears!

Ram's conduct with Sita, his wife, is far worse, and should put any modern chauvinist to shame. After having risked millions of monkey lives to rescue her from Ravan's Lanka, he refuses to accept her as his wife. He treats her like disposable property and asks her to live with any of his brothers instead of him, and then publicly voices his doubts about her fidelity and makes her submit to a test to prove her purity.

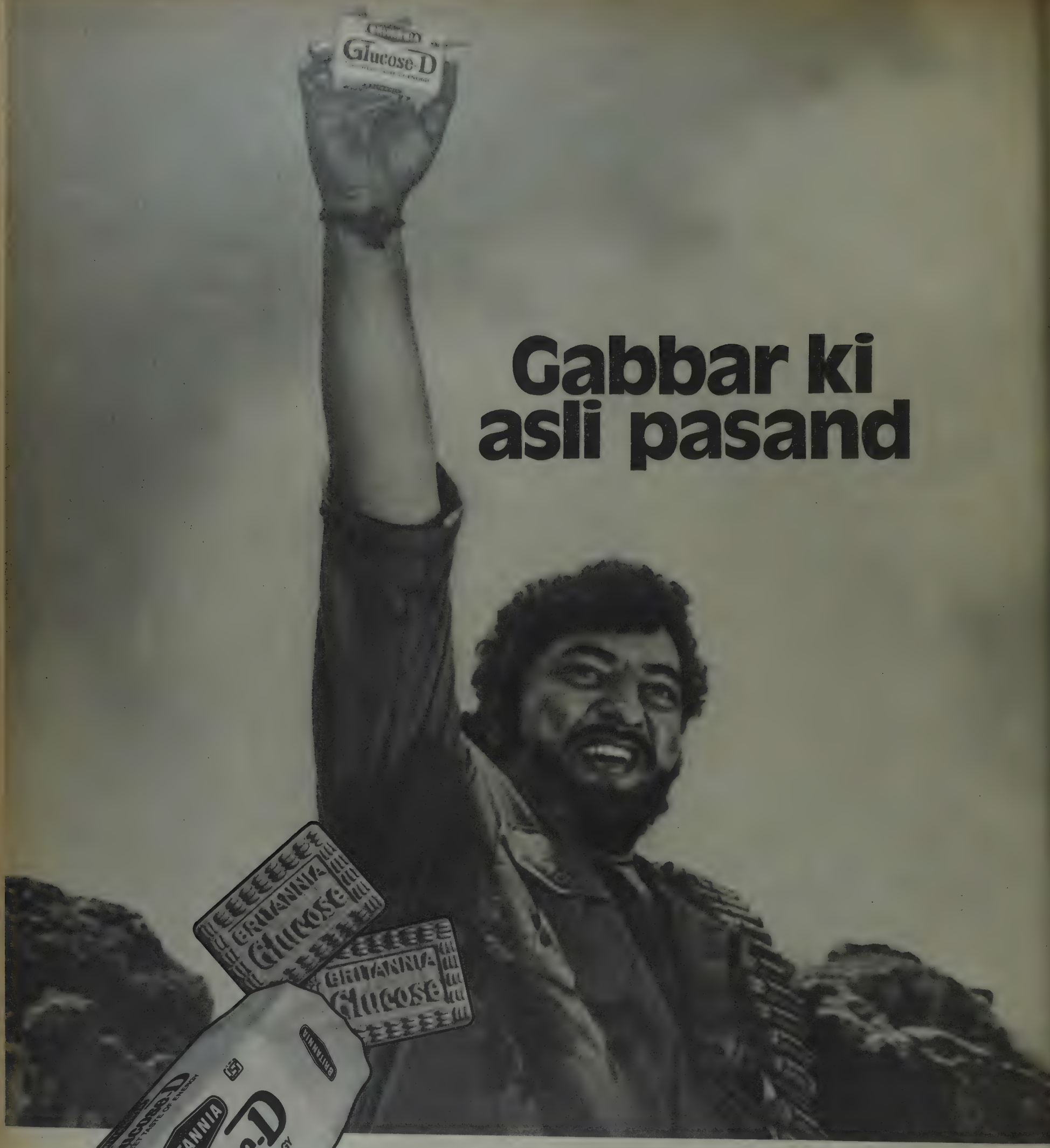
All that this barbaric behaviour is based on is a feeling in Ram's mind that the monkeys, having fought so long and so hard to rescue Sita, may doubt her purity.

Ram overlooks the fact that the monkeys have fought for him only because their ruler, Sugriva, was pledged to help Ram

ABOVE: The abduction of Sita. According to the author, several aspects of Ravan's character as revealed in the Ramayana make him more worthy of admiration and emulation than Ram.

RIGHT: Sita on the pyre. Ram's conduct, says the author, is so insensitive it should put any modern chauvinist to shame.

Gabbar ki asli pasand



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THE RAMAYANA REVISITED

fight Ravan, in return for having been (wrongly) installed on his brother Vali's throne by Ram. Hence, the question — "Was our cause worth fighting for?" — is inapplicable to the monkeys. Anyway, there is enough evidence in Hanuman's attitude towards Sita to prove that he regards her as the embodiment of purity. However, even if Ram feels duty-bound to set their minds at ease, he can tell them that Sita is pure—after all his word is Truth for them—and then go ahead and at least welcome Sita back and then prove his faith in and love for her by explaining the delicate situation to her. Since he doesn't do so, we can only infer that he himself is not convinced of her purity. This reflects on Ram's overly suspicious and petty nature, for there is no reason for him to doubt her. Had Sita succumbed to Ravan, the latter wouldn't have wasted any time announcing this; and Hanuman would have promptly confirmed the news. And in that case, no war would have been fought to rescue Sita — for had Sita succumbed willingly, Ram would not have wanted her back, and had she done so under coercion, he would have rejected her as an 'impure' woman. In either case, the war would have been unnecessary.

But disgracing Sita publicly once is not sufficient for Ram. He does so again and yet again.

A good ruler is not one who listens blindly to his subjects and, knowing the truth to be contrary to their opinion, lacks the confidence to convince them of it. Such a person is a passive follower, not a daring leader. But Ram is such a coward that he makes no attempt to convince his people openly of Sita's purity by seeking out the help of the witnesses to the truth — Hanuman, the monkeys and the Rakshasas (all of whom are more or less his slaves by this time). To add to his shameful behaviour he hides the truth from Sita who, being a Queen, should know her peoples' doubts about her character. Ram makes a decision to banish Sita, a decision which subjects her to terrible humiliation and hardships, without even informing her about it, and orders poor Laxman to implement it, thus reaching the depths of cowardice.

Finally, the unkindest cut of all. When after being defeated by his sons, Lava and Kush, he meets Sita again, and gets the (undeserved) opportunity to beg her forgiveness and take her home as Queen, Ram, deaf to his family's pleas, has the gall to talk of Sita undergoing another public trial to prove herself! Such a man we worship as god!

Sita is held before us as the Ideal Indian woman, for her capacity to endure suffering and her purity. But Sita has other qualities which command greater admiration. Her initiative in daring to step out of the **Laxman-rekha**, the boundary prescribed for her by Laxman, in order to offer an old mendicant hospitality. Her resourcefulness in distress, when she, being abducted by Ravan, leaves her ornaments as a trail for Ram and Laxman. Her courage in consistently refusing Ravan's offers, in the face of his great wealth, learning, and his threats, and despite her own vulnerability. Her compassion, when she prevents Hanuman from killing her guards, because she realises that they tortured her only on Ravan's orders. Lacking the modern alternative of separation, Sita prefers death to submission to unnecessary and degrading tests each time. The only pity is that her love and respect for Ram remain the same even after each test proves her purity.

Ram is not worthy of Sita, he is not worthy of our worship. Ravan is far more admirable. His abduction of Sita is the only real wrong that he does. But his self-controlled conduct with Sita, when he could easily have raped her, or married her forcibly; his willingness to heed his wife's sobering counsel even at the height of his rage at Sita's constant refusal, make him worthier of emulation than Ram. Ravan for his name and reputation, readily sacrifices his people, his family and himself; while Ram, fighting for his wife, gives up hope and prepares to retreat at every slight hitch, and has to be persuaded to continue by his friends.

None among Ram, Ravan or Sita deserve to be worshipped as gods or goddesses today. Perhaps in the ancient age in which the Ramayana was written, its values of obedience and honouring one's word, whether it be right or wrong, were relevant. But we have come so far today, our values too have changed. If we must worship, shouldn't we seek out new gods or, failing to find them, create new ones who would inspire us to fight for better values and a better world?

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TABLE TALK

Did you know that of all the varieties of ready-prepared soups on sale in the U.K., and of soup served in restaurants and canteens, tomato soup maintains an unshakeable majority? Over a quarter of all soup we drink is this variety, yet foreign visitors unfavourably comment on how it compares unfavourably (to them) with tomato soups as served in other lands.

In France, for instance, several clear kinds of tomato soup may be distinguished, perhaps the most interesting being tourin of tomatoes, or the so-called nuptial soup of the Perigord district. It is given this name because the local custom is for wedding-guests to offer this soup to the happy couple in the middle of their wedding night, bursting into the bridal chamber with steaming hot tourin which, by long tradition the pair have to accept!

This tomato soup is made very slowly with large tomatoes, onions and strong seasoning, and is served with added vermicelli butter and croutons. Under normal conditions, it is very appetising!

Did you know that long before Europeans had become acquainted with ginger, people of the East knew and revered it as a sweetmeat, as flavouring, and as a medicine? Coming originally from China, ginger was not cultivated on any large scale until Spaniards planted roots brought from the Orient or Jamaica in the eighteenth century.

Although some folk still think of ginger in connection with sweet foods, it can be a useful addition (either powdered or whole) to many savoury dishes. Roast lamb, veal and duck are all excellent with ground ginger sprinkled over them during the cooking process. With roast duck, a lump or two can be placed inside the bird with advantage to the final flavour.

Kababs and mixed grills respond to small slices of preserved ginger incorporated with the various meats and tomatoes. Try adding a little green ginger to mutton stews or to the stockpot, and experiment with pepping up cheese rarebits with ground ginger instead of the more usual mustard.

David Gunston

Picnic Piccadillos

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THE LITTLE WOMAN

by Don Tobin

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"What a lovely coloured cow!"

"It's a Jersey."

"Is it? I thought it was its skin."

* * *

Moore Street in Dublin is famous for its street dealers, most of whom have tongues that would file stainless steel.

"I want to complain about the bananas you sold me yesterday. They were awful hard to skin."

"Look, maam, what do you expect for the price? Zip fasteners?"

* * *

The American tourist had been complaining a great deal about the food.

"Here," he said to the waitress, holding out a piece of meat for inspection. "Do you call that pig?"

"Which end of the fork, sir?" she asked sweetly.

* * *

He had been in a bad road smash and Fagan had him carried into the bar. The injured man opened his eyes and looked around.

"You've been in a bad smash," said Fagan, "and I had you brought here to bring you to."

HA HA world of laughter

"Very well," groaned the victim, "make both of them double whiskies."

* *

Magistrate (to old offender): "Now, Bob, what brought you here again?"

"Two policemen, sir."

"Drunk, I suppose?"

"Yes, both of them."

* *

On a sign board of a tailoring establishment in the heart of Hong Kong:

"Foreign Ladies can have fits upstairs."

* *

A taxi driver sat silently at the bar. His face bore an expression of extreme sadness.

Friend: "What in the world is the matter?"

"Oh, I'm having trouble with my wife."

Friend: "What happened?"

"Well, she said she wasn't going to speak to me for thirty days."

Friend: "But that ought to make you happy."

"It did, but today is the last day."

* *

Mistress: "And above all, I want obedience and truthfulness."

New Maid: "Yes, madam. But if anybody calls when you are in, and you want me to say that you are out, which comes first — obedience or truthfulness?"

* *

Mrs. Jones (to psychiatrist): "I wish you'd see my husband, Doctor. He blows smoke rings through his nose and it frightens me."

Psychiatrist: "I don't know that it's so terribly unusual for a person to blow smoke rings through his nose."

Mrs. Jones: "But, doctor, my husband doesn't smoke."

* *

She is neither plain nor pretty

She is neither thin nor stout.

And they always call her "Tonsils,"

'Cause the doctor takes her out.

* *

Wife: "What fools sheep are, John."

Husband: "Yes, my lamb."

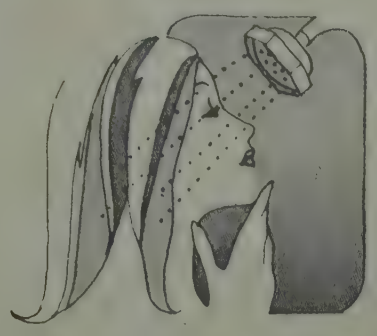
* *

Judge: "You are accused of deserting your wife."

Defendant: "Your Honour, if you know my wife, you'd know I'm not a deserter — I'm a refugee."

Compiled by George Fegradoe

Must you suffer chapped skin and cracked lips every winter? Protect yourself these four ways!



1 All those hot, steamy baths you have every winter morning don't help a bit. You end up losing vital moisture and your skin becomes scaly and dry. Bathe in tepid water if you can't stand the thought of cold baths.

2 If you don't have the time to oil yourself, try this quick, simple alternative. After your bath, put in a few drops of olive oil—even coconut oil will do—into a mug of warm water and splash it all over your body. Then just pat yourself dry with a towel.

3 Those winter winds raise a lot of dust. And dirt and cracked skin are a dangerous combination. A good home remedy is a 'maida' and milk paste rubbed into the skin. Just see the dirt come out and your skin glow.

4 Boroline is a must in winter as a skin conditioner.

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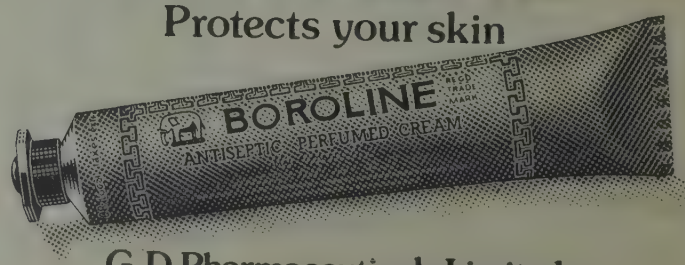

G.D. Pharmaceuticals Limited
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THE LETTER

FOR DAYS RENU HAD WAITED FOR THE LETTER. NOW SHE WANTED TO READ IT AGAIN AND AGAIN IN THE PRIVACY OF HER ROOM. BUT THE FAMILY WAS SUSPICIOUS. WHAT WAS IN THAT LETTER?

Jayati DasGupta

It was about 10.30 in the morning. The small two-storeyed house was quiet, except for the assorted sounds coming from the direction of the kitchen. Renu was upstairs in her own room, and the only other occupant of the first floor, at the moment, was Renu's grandfather. The old man was lying in his favourite armchair on the balcony with his feet stretched out in the sun and was dozing peacefully. Grandmother, fond of cooking and competent at it, was busy in the kitchen downstairs preparing lunch, with Renu's mother helping her. Kalu, the young fellow who worked for them, was cleaning some cooking utensils in the open courtyard behind the kitchen and was trying to catch a glimpse or two of his sweetheart, the next-door maid servant. Renu's father, who was a busy doctor, was away at the hospital and was not expected back before lunch time. Her two younger brothers had left for school.

Renu herself sat in front of a table piled with her text-books and excercise books, with her back to the door. To any one happening to look in, Renu would appear to be deeply engrossed in her studies. But actually neither her mind nor her eyes were on the book that lay open before her. Her eyes were focussed through the open window across her table on the path leading up to the house, and her mind was oscillating between hopes and misgivings, dreams and frustrations. For the last fortnight or so maintaining such a vigil in the guise of studying had become her routine.

Suddenly, Renu sat bolt upright. A khaki-clad postman had just rounded the corner and was coming plodding down the path towards their house. Renu leapt up and was down the stairs in a moment. But she remembered to check her speed before passing the kitchen door. If her mother or grandmother saw her rushing past, there were sure to be a lot of questions and the last thing she wanted to do at this moment was to draw attention to herself.

Renu peeped into the letter-box with a thumping heart, half hopeful and half afraid of finding the usual assortment of hastily scribbled postcards from relatives, and medical literature for her doctor father. But what she saw made her heart miss a beat. Reclining inside, almost majestic in its isolation, was a cream coloured envelope. One look at it convinced Renu that this was the letter — the object of her fondest expectations. With trembling hands she lifted it out gently and for a few seconds held it to her heart, as if afraid to open it. Then, steadying herself, she slit open the envelope and took out a single sheet from within. As she read it a thousand fireworks seemed to explode within her. It had happened. Her dream had come true. She did not know whether to laugh or to cry. She only knew that she wanted to be alone with the letter for some time to read and re-read it to her heart's content. For this purpose she started back for the privacy of her own room.

But this time Renu was not destined to escape unseen. Her grandmother spotted her and exclaimed, "Why Renu, I thought you were upstairs studying for your B.Sc. exams. What are you doing here?" Before Renu could think of some suitable answer, her mother called out to her, "Renu, I think I heard someone at the gate, possibly it was the postman. Will you please go and see if there is any letter for us?"

Renu hastily replied, "I looked, there is nothing," and consoled herself with the thought that this wasn't exactly a lie, as there was actually no mail for anyone but herself. Neither her mother nor her grandmother attempted any further conversation. So, thanking her stars, she turned her footsteps towards the staircase with a mumbled, "I am going up to study."

Continued on page 33

DREAMS ARE MADE OF THIS

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FOR WOMEN, ABOUT WOMEN

NEW DELHI :

The government is considering a recommendation to treat the "irretrievable" breakdown of marriage as a ground for divorce under the Hindu Marriages Act, 1955, Law Minister Shanti Bhushan told the Rajya Sabha. Under the recommendation the dissolution of marriage would be allowed only if the spouses had lived apart for a continuous period of three years except in cases where the wife was able to show grave financial hardship to her or the existence of circumstances to establish that it would be wrong to dissolve the marriage. He also said there was no proposal to set up separate courts to deal with marriage and divorce.

Indian Express. August 15.

BOMBAY :

An 11-year-old girl, on her way to school, was attacked in broad daylight on the Grant Road railway bridge by two men. The principal of Girton High School told the story of the attack. The girl was returning to school after lunch. As she was crossing the bridge, she was attacked by two well-built men. Her clothes were torn and she was hurt in the ribs and face. The bridge was crowded but nobody intervened in spite of the girl's screams. Finally, an elderly fruit vendor tried to rescue her. He was beaten up by the two men. Meanwhile, the girl escaped. She came to the school in a state of shock. A complaint was lodged with the Lamington Road police.

Times of India, August 22.

BANGKOK :

The Thai government has completed the first draft of a Bill which will legalise prostitution in the country. The Bill would allow prostitutes to operate legally but only in registered brothels. It is estimated that there are tens of thousands of prostitutes and hundreds of massage parlours functioning as brothels in Thailand. The Bill also proposes a minimum penalty of seven-year imprisonment for pimps. Prostitutes found operating illegally will not be punished but sent to rehabilitation centres.

Sunday Standard. September 3.

UJJAIN :

A village woman who killed a notorious dacoit, Majret, with lathis and stones, told the Madhya Pradesh panchayat minister, Mr. Haribhau Joshi, "Give me a gun, not money." The woman, Mrs. Gitabai, was to be awarded Rs. 1,000 by the minister at Bolai, in Shajpur district, for her exemplary courage. Mr. Joshi announced that she would be given a gun as well as the award.

Times of India, September 5.

CALCUTTA :

A majority of mothers come for medical termination of pregnancies (MTP) because of economic difficulties, although they feel MTP is sinful as it means "killing a life." This was revealed in a study jointly conducted by a team of obstetricians led by Dr. Mira Roy and Dr. B.C. Lahiri of the city's two medical college hospitals. Of the 300 mothsrs studied, 41.3 per cent stated that economic hardships had forced them to terminate pregnancies.

Free Press Journal, September 5.

Computerised marriages have proved three times more successful than love marriages, according to a survey conducted by the Ministry of Health in West Germany. The survey says 40 out of 100 married couples who wed through a computer dating service think they have a very happy life, while only 19 per cent of the couples who entered wedlock after romance made a similar claim. The survey concludes that computers plan marriages more carefully than human beings.

Free Press Journal, September 6.

A police station exclusively 'manned' by women is proposed to be set up in Hyderabad on an experimental basis, according to Andhra Pradesh Home Minister, M. M. Shamim. If the experiment proved successful, it would gradually be extended to other parts of the state.

Times of India, September 14.

AHMEDABAD

The city police have registered a case against a railway employee for allegedly raping his minor daughter. According to the police, the case came to light following the transfer of the girl from one hospital to another after her abortion. Cases have also been registered against the girl's mother and a midwife for allegedly abetting in the abortion. The police said the mother was quite helpless in preventing her husband from his dastardly act.

Free Press Bulletin, September 14.

NEW DELHI :

A working group has made out a strong case for linking women's employment to their ability to exercise their rights with autonomy and dignity. The working group on "employment of women" set up by the Planning Commission says that unless supportive services like creches, child care centres and lighter house work are ensured, the increased employabilitity of women will only further increase their load and reduce them to mere beasts of burden. The group has made several recommendations regarding the training of women for employment, the financing of programmes for women's employment, and the Centre's responsibility for promoting women's development corporations in the states.

Times of India, September 18.

HYDERABAD :

The use of the expression "wine, women and wealth" by Excise Minister P. Ganga Reddy in the Andhra Assembly while answering a supplementary on the location of liquor shops, evoked a strong protest from the Janata woman member, Mrs. T. Lakshmikanthamma. Reacting sharply to the Minister's remark that "wine and women were causes of trouble," she said this only "revealed the bourgeois mentality which continued to treat women as no more than a commodity."

Indian Express, September 19.

NEW DELHI :

The early 70s witnessed a marked rise in crime among Indian women and the trend is bound to grow, an official study indicates. The study, carried out by the Bureau of Police Research and Development, is based on arrest figures for the first five years of the decade. It shows that the number of women arrested grew between 1971 and 1975 by 48.5 per cent. against 47.3 per cent in the case of men.

Times of India, September 21.

TORONTO :

Prostitutes could save a lot of trouble for themselves, their customers and other women by wearing a uniform, an advocate of legalised prostitution says. Baba Yaga told a weekend conference on rape, prostitution and the criminal code that women's complaints about men soliciting them in the streets for sex could be eliminated if prostitutes wore uniforms. There would be no harassment "if prostitutes did not disguise themselves as other women and other women did not disguise themselves as prostitutes," Miss Yaga said. "Personally, I would be perfectly happy wearing a uniform." Miss Yaga is the founder of BEAVER, an organisation comprising about 100 members of current and former prostitutes which lobbies on behalf of prostitutes for changes in the criminal code. BEAVER is the acronym for "better end all vicious erotic repression."

Indian Express, October 4.

VIDISHA (MP):

A 22-year old Harijan woman, in an affidavit before the magistrate here has alleged that she was stripped naked and beaten up by some villagers at Gopsalpur village, about 60 km from here, last month, but the police refused to take any action against the offenders. Her husband, who also filed an affidavit, said he was abused at the police station when he went there to complain. The trouble started when the woman went to the village well to bring water. She was prevented from doing so by members of a high caste family. When she resisted, other people joined in beating her and tore off her clothes, she said in the affidavit.

Free Press Journal, October 9.

Compiled by Gouri Salvi

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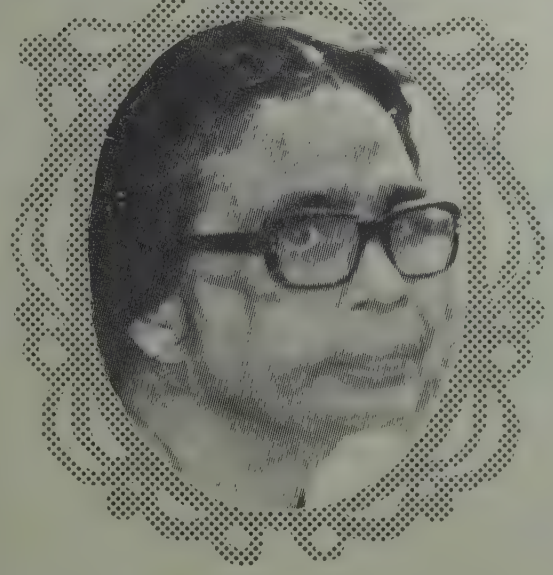

DR. MARY VERGHESE

DOCTOR ON WHEELS

Twenty-five years ago, before 'women's lib' became a battle cry, a woman began two battles at the same time: a wider social battle as a doctor, and a personal battle to rise above her disabilities as a paraplegic.

This remarkable woman is Dr. Mary Verghese of Vellore. Two years after her graduation, a holiday excursion was soured by an automobile accident, giving birth to a story of rare courage.

Mary's life till the accident was a mixture of the chores of daily life and the struggle to get a foothold in her chosen profession, the highly competitive, predominantly male world of medicine. Acquitting herself brilliantly in school, she secured admission to the Christian Medical College in Vellore. There, her driving passion to be a doctor got her through the difficult medical course with flying colours. This was in 1952. Her chosen speciality was like that of many women doctors of her time— gynaecology; and she seemed all set for a career in it. The accident banished her for life to a wheelchair.

The long months in the hospital bed were difficult both physically and mentally. Her injured spine was encased in plaster which meant she could only lie on her back. But it was the mental turmoil that was more distressing. What was she to do with her five-and-a-half years of training?

It was then that Dr. Verghese decided that, come what may, she would return to her chosen profession. Her decision was the product of hours of agonising reappraisal, with the advice and encouragement of her friends and colleagues. Especially inspiring was Dr. Paul Brand, the British surgeon who had broken new ground in Vellore, devising novel operations to help leprosy patients.

Months of physiotherapy followed, forcing stubborn muscles to cooperate, an attempt to compensate for Mary's powerless legs. She had considered various fields where her lack of mobility would not be a serious hinderance. One possibility had been pathology, but she disliked the idea of working with tissues in the isolation of a laboratory.

She could see from her hospital bed the leprosy clinic of the CMC Hospital, where the patients queued up for Dr. Brand's services. And this suggested leprosy work as a possibility, a kind of fellowship in suffering.

Once her mind was made up, there was no stopping her. She started work in CMC's leprosy clinic. It was not easy. Pressure sores and related ailments would drive her to bed but she would be back soon to pull her weight in the overworked clinic.

Then Dr. Brand, knowing that surgery was Mary's first love, made, what seemed to her, an astouding proposition: Would she like to help him with reconstructive surgery on leprosy patients? Though awed at first by the idea, she agreed, realising that hand surgery, the major area of surgical reconstruction, was one of the few operations which surgeons performed sitting down. At first she assisted Dr. Brand and in the process learned all the techniques involved. Then she started performing the operations herself. It was not easy; each operation was a labour of love. Her hands not only had to perform the delicate operation, but also had to maintain body balance, a function normally assisted by the lower part of the body. Her body jacket was constricting.

She herself had to undergo several operations, each entailing months of bed rest and excruciating pain. But each operation took her a step closer to minimising her disability. She decided to get a fusion operation done, which rendered her spine completely rigid, thus eliminating the need for a body jacket. Another operation fused the rest of the vertebrae below the site of her spinal injury. But it wasn't all. Recurring pain at the injury site forced her to take a momentous decision. She decided to have a cordectomy — the surgical removal of the section of the spinal cord in the area of pain. This operation removed more than just the pain; it removed the hope of ever being able to walk again. But she wanted to get back to work.

1957 was the year of the second great change in Dr. Mary Verghese's life. After much coaxing by family and friends, she decided to fly to one of the foremost institutes of rehabilitation in Australia. She spent nine months there learning how to extend the use of her existing faculties to almost superhuman limits. She also saw the overwhelming need for a similar institution in her own country.

However, this had to wait till she got a chance to study rehabilitation techniques from Dr. Rusk, one of the pioneers of modern rehabilitation methods, at the Institute of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation in New York. An exhausting course of study for normal people, for her it was even more so. But she managed to do it, even fitting into her busy schedule sight-seeing tours (on her own). The pinnacle of her efforts at independence was reached when she learned to drive. With her specially adapted car she did not have to depend on anyone for her travels.

Mary realised immediately that the techniques that she had learned could not be applied in toto to India. Lacking the expertise and financial resources available in the U.S., she had to adapt almost all the methods for the Indian environment. This meant that, besides learning the applications of various aids, she had to study the aids themselves.

The result of all this effort was the creation of the Rehabilitation Institute at the C.M.C. Hospital in Vellore in 1966. Mary drove herself to the limits of her endurance to help the handicapped who flocked to her department.

She was not immune to the many afflictions which beset all paraplegics. Often confined to bed, with frequent infections and the additional travail of asthma, she must have often felt like giving it all up. But she did not, and the department grew from strength to strength and soon became the model for other similar departments in the country. In July 1975, she felt that the department was strong enough to continue without her. She was tired by years of work and of constantly battling with her body. She retired from C.M.C. Vellore and decided to go back to her home state — Kerala. But her will to serve was unabated. She retired to a hospital campus so that she could occasionally help the patients who needed her.

Zachariah Jacob

A CENTRE FOR NEW LIFE

The Rehabilitation Institute of the CMC Hospital is located in a quiet mango grove, about six kilometres from Vellore. It can admit 27 patients at a time, most of them staying for about six months. During this period they come to think of themselves not as institutionalised patients, but as a community helping one another on the road to self-reliance. Many of the patients are paralysed below the waist, or on one side of the body or sometimes in all four limbs. Patients suffering incapacities from polio and birth injuries are also helped.

The whole programme of the Institute is centred on the objective of self-reliance. At the time of admission, the patient's previous occupation, socio-economic condition, and the family set-up are assessed, along with the extent of the physical disability. Based on these considerations, individualised programmes are planned and implemented. When a person's previous occupation is not suitable for him in the light of his disabilities, he is taught a more practicable trade like shop-keeping, sewing, carpentry, bag making, embroidery, etc. Women, especially, are taught to carry out household tasks, like cooking and washing. In the case of poor patients not only is concessional care provided, but funds are also provided at the time of their discharge, as working capital for their new occupation.

Besides serving the patients directly, the Institute serves them indirectly by training personnel for rehabilitation work. It offers practical training to students of occupational therapy, physiotherapy and nursing.

THE END OF A DAY

Pratibha Nath

The day's work is never done. The tired body cries for the end of the day. But the end of a day is the beginning of another

Morning came all too soon. Meena still had some aching left in her limbs from the day before the day defore the day before, she couldn't quite say when. Perhaps Sunday when Arati and family dropped in for coffee and stayed to lunch, all six of them, brother-in-law and sister-in-law and two kids who did not eat vegetables. Or perhaps it was the last two days in school, with so many teachers on leave and all the extra classes on the second floor. Meena stretched her legs in an attempt to ease the cramps.

Slowly, Meena rolled herself out of her blanket and sat up, feeling for her slippers. They were not there and Meena wished she had the vocabulary to swear. She glanced at Neelu, lost in sleep, two beds away. It must be Neelu. He was always too busy to look for his own slippers or put away his clothes or arrange his books.

Meena stood up and the cold, hard floor sent a shock through her so that her eyes flew open, meeting the candid face of the clock. Five-thirty. Thank God there was time, there was still time for a cup of tea.

She found another pair of slippers, shoved her feet into them and went from bedroom to dining room to back door to terrace, drawing her breath sharply in as a blast of cold air met her full in the face. Her left ear began to throb again. Last time it took two months to cure. Meena bent her head against the wind and made a dash for the kitchen.

Once inside, she slammed the door shut, lighted the gas and put the water on for tea. Then she measured out some flour and began to knead it. Harder and harder she jabbed. . .

Who ever heard of a flat with the kitchen right out in the open? And the landlord wanted an agreement to the effect that they would leave at the end of three years. As if anyone in his right mind would like to stay there a day more than he must. The taps were dry and the roof leaked and. . .

The water began to boil. Meena opened the tin of tea leaves and made a mental note of the fact that the contents were nearly finished. So was the sugar. And cooking oil was running low. After the puris were done today, there would be just enough left for one meal.

With still a week to payday, there was only one answer, she'd have to cash a small cheque at her bank, for say, twenty-five rupees. But she recoiled at the thought. What would the accountant think? Last time she went to deposit her pay cheque he had looked hard at it. "Do you really mean to say that you teach at the. . . school?" he had asked, making her flush with pride.

The tea was hot and sweet and oh such a comfort. Meena would have loved a second cup but there was no time. No time. . . no time. . . and already the better part of her lifetime was gone. She jerked herself away. The potatoes had boiled and her husband must be wanting his tea. She carried it in and found him lying on the pillow, lean and dark and tousled. Their eyes met and he gave her the briefest of smiles for he was like a stranger to her save when he wanted her. Without a word Meena left his tea on the table and went back to the kitchen.

From six to seven in the morning seemed ten minutes. Meena never quite managed to sit and yet the last few bites of toast were washed down with tea. At seven the family started trickling down. Neelu went first, Meena and Shobha followed. Meena's husband was to leave an hour later. At the door Meena turned to him. "Your lunch-box is on the table. Puri-alu," she said.

"Wow!" he replied in mock excitement and she turned and left, carrying with her a sense of personal failure.

She carried it back home at three, along with a bag of exercise books and a face that said beware. She opened the door and retribution stared her full in the face: the beds were unmade, the table littered with breakfast dishes. Meena sat a long time, staring at the mess, while every fibre in her body ached at the thought of starting the day all over again.

Somehow she fed Shobha and gave Neelu his milk and toast when he came home. Then she went and lay down and went right off to sleep.

The doorbell rang thrice and Neelu answered it, and the milkman called, and Meena's husband came home and made himself a cup of tea and broke a plate in the kitchen, but Meena slept on. Her husband sat around all evening trying to read the paper and missing the fuss and looking after and all the lovely, lively chit chat about who said what at school and still Meena slept on.

When yesterday's paper had been read through a second time he went to the bedroom again and again saw Meena's inert form. It was getting on to seven. Soon the children would be asking for dinner and Meena, dear, efficient, I-shall-not-fail-you-if-it-kills-me Meena, was too tired to care. Too tired. Just how long had she been too tired, he wondered.

It was nine when Meena felt a hand on her forehead, at once gentle and firm and a voice, equally gentle but not so firm, seemed to call her from long ago. "Meenu, Meenu, darling." She had not quite surfaced when he laid a cheek against hers and there was no hunger in the gesture, only warmth.

Meena opened her eyes. Minutes later she was at the dining-table, like any other day, with this difference — today she alone was seated and the rest of them hovered around her. "Mom, I laid the table," said Neelu with pride. "I made the salad," cried Shobha. "And I did the cooking," said her husband, quietly, guiltily. "Sorry, the rice caught at the bottom of the pan." But Meena was looking at her family with the biggest smile in years. "Wow!" she said and she meant it.

PAPER PATTERN—1

Sheroo Cooper

COOPER'S TAILORING AND CUTTING ACADEMY

BECAUSE OF REPEATED REQUESTS FROM OUR READERS, WE ARE REVISING OUR POPULAR PAPER PATTERN FEATURE FROM THIS MONTH.

FOR THE YOUNG MISS

A loose-fitting blouse for teenagers. Front gathered at shoulder seams, short sleeves with turn-back cuffs and front opening.

Measurements: To fit Bust: 80 cms. to 82.5 cms.

See for the pull-out in this issue for the actual size paper pattern and instructions.

ten off coloured wool and work 4 rows more of dc. in White. Fasten off.

Each of the other motifs are worked to match in size.

Altogether 5 motifs are worked from each of the 3 given graphs and one extra motif is worked (with a figure of a boy) to make up a total of 16 motifs. For placing of these motifs refer photograph.

Between each motif a panel of Black is worked in tr. working 24 tr. in each row. Working number of rows to required length of the motif.

Altogether 12 panels are to be worked. To either side of these panels a motif is attached with Black over cast sts. to form 4 panels. Between each of these panels, other 3 panels worked in rows of tr. in Black are similarly attached. Each of these 3 panels are worked having 28 tr. in each row working to match lengths of the prepared panel of motifs.

Lastly cut a border to measure from the checked material to fit the outer edge of crochet blanket. The width of the piece cut should be 24 cms. Half of the border is folded at back with well set corners. Stitch in position to acquire a neat finish.

Arnavaz Dhondy

Photographs: Farokh Reporter

FOR A VERY SPECIAL BABY

A pretty rug in nursery motifs which doubles as a blanket

MATERIALS: Raymond's Knitting wool "Aruna Special" 4 ply: 12 balls Black, 8 balls White, 1 ball each Green 543 and 580, Magenta 546, Yellow 504 and 595, Blue 553, 2 balls each Pink 502 and Magenta 539 (25 grams each). Crochet hook no. 14 and 1 metre checked "Terene"/cotton material.

MEASUREMENTS: 121 cms. x 95 cms. (inclusive of 11 cms. of checked border). Each motif is 17 cms. x 12 cms.

ABBREVIATIONS: ch.=chain; dc. = double crochet; tr. = treble; rep. = repeat.

MOTIFS

Instructions: With White wool work a row of 37 ch., turn.

1st row: 1 dc. in 2nd ch. from hook, 1 dc. in each ch. till end, 1 ch., turn.

2nd row: 1 dc. in each dc. to end, 1 ch., turn.

Rep. last row twice more.

Then join colours as required and work pattern from the graph following the colour indications from the given key. Working from first row of graph onwards and working throughout in dc. On completion of the graph fas-

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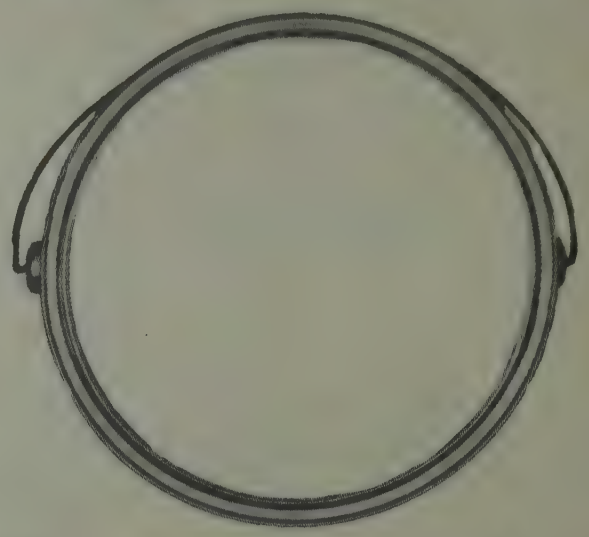

the name makes no difference.

It does, five years later.

NEROLAC
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It makes a big difference.

beauty bulletin

TO ERASE FINE LINES

I have fine lines above my upper lip and also from nose to mouth. Although I am in the early twenties, they give me an aged appearance. How can I remove them?

B.R. (Madras)

To get rid of the lines above your upper lip, pull chin in and draw the mouth inwards between teeth. Alternate this with pursing your lips, thursting chin out.

For the nose to mouth lines, puff the cheeks filling them with air, then blow out the air slowly. When you puff out the cheeks, there is a pull in the neck muscles upwards which firms the chinline.

BLEACHING HAIR

I bleach my hair often. Is this harmful?

What is a rinse?

V.C. (Delhi)

In bleaching hair, perming and tinting chemicals are used, which in the long run tend to make the hair harsh, dry and brittle. If this happens to your hair, stop all treatments and have your hair conditioned.

Rinse is a temporary method of colouring hair. The colour lasts only until the next shampoo. Rinses come in several shades and are generally used to brighten the natural colour.

IS BLEACHING HAIR HARMFUL?

Among the most popular is henna or mehndi which imparts a reddish glow to the hair. This lasts longer.

OPEN PORES

I am 22. I have an oily complexion and open pores. Please suggest a home remedy for this.

Also, I am overweight and have been dieting for a week now. My problem is that I tend to nibble in between meals. What should I do?

R.K.K. (Bombay)

Those with oily skin are faced with this problem of open pores. Try this treatment. Add a grain of camphor or alum to beaten white of an egg and mix well. Spread this over your face and leave it on for about 15 minutes. When dry, rinse off. Do this once a week.

Here is a useful tip — take half a glass of water and sip slowly. Your craving to nibble will disappear.

DANDRUFF PROBLEM

I have oily hair and skin but I don't have pimples. I am suffering from dandruff for the past fortnight. Please advise.

B.L. (Panji)

Dandruff can be caused by several factors. Scalp infection tension, faulty diet, etc. The most important thing for you to do is to keep your scalp and hair absolutely clean. Since you have oily hair, you can wash it every alternate day, if need be. An anti-dandruff lotion will help.

Before you shampoo your hair, cut a lemon in half and rub it on the scalp. Leave it on for about ten minutes then rinse well. Then shampoo your hair with shikakai. If you find no improvement, consult your physician.

Include in your diet eggs, fruit, skimmed milk, fish etc. Chocolates, rich desserts, greasy and spicy foods are not for you.

TIRED EYES

Whenever I come home from outside, especially in the afternoons, my eyes get very tired. They become reddish. What should I do to relieve them?

My elbows are dark; how can I lighten them?

S.P.(Pune)

Eyes strained by sun can be relieved by covering the eyelids with cottonwool pads soaked in eau de cologne. Place these on eyelids and lie down in a darkened room for about ten minutes.

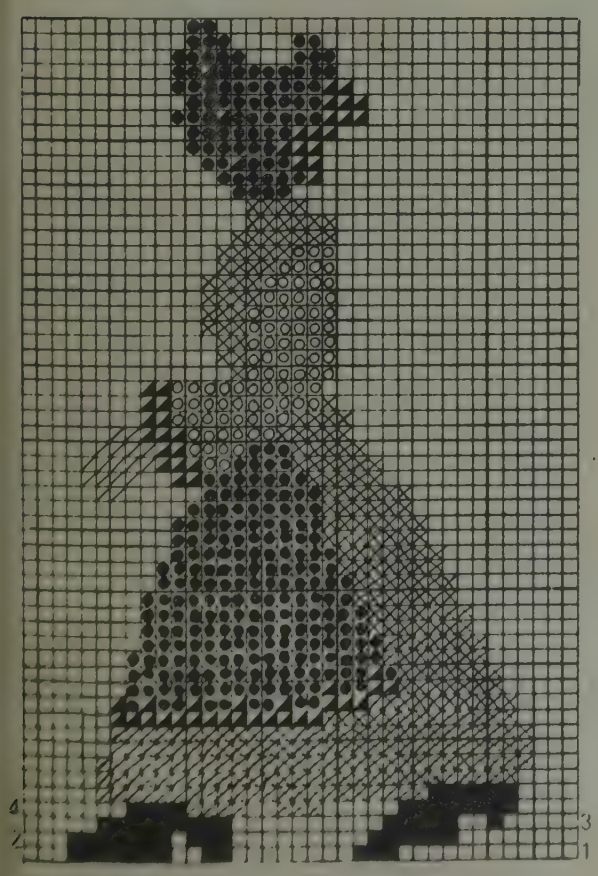
Or take equal parts of chilled water and lemon juice and soak cottonwool pads in this mixture. Cover your eyelids with this, lie down and rest for some time.

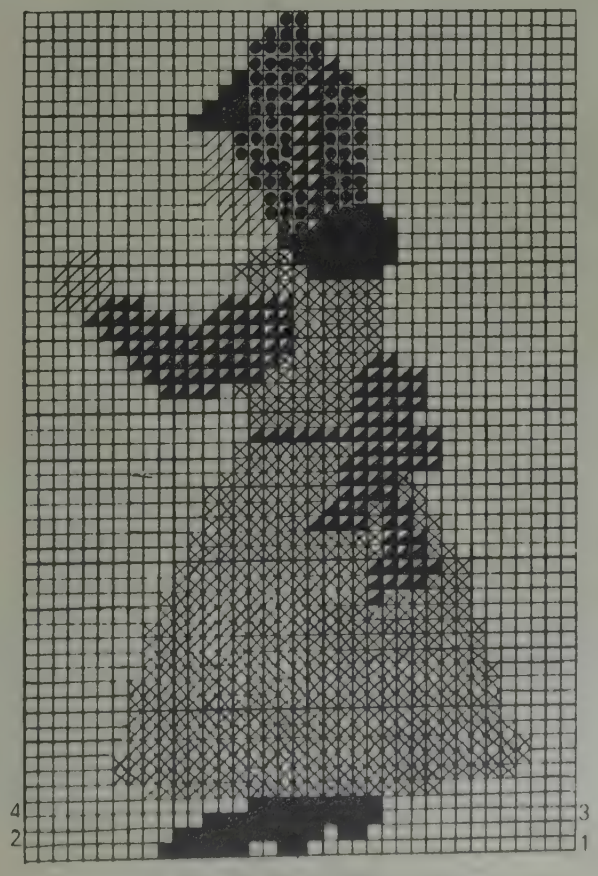
While taking your bath, rub soapy pumice stone on the elbows. Rinse, pat dry and apply lemon juice to bleach them. Rinse again. At night massage with olive oil.

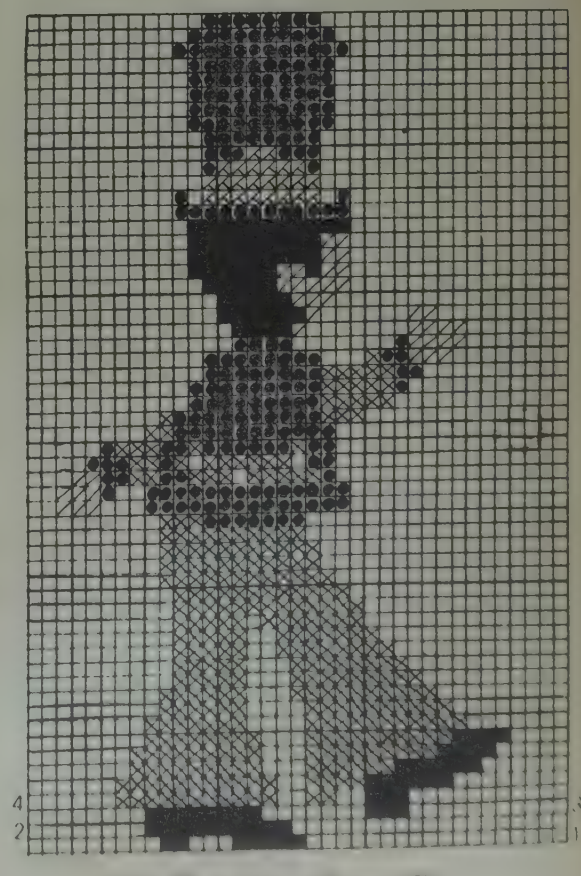
FOR A VERY SPECIAL BABY

GRAPHS

Continued from page 23



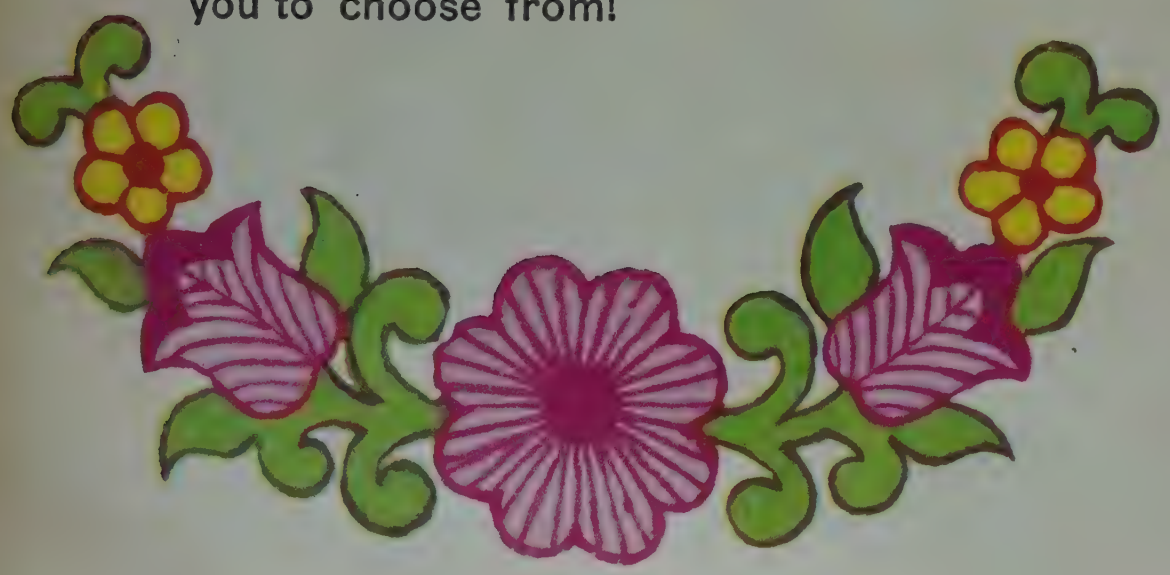




PRETTY POSY TO EMBROIDER

Dinoo Vacha

Here's a little floral motif
to embroider on your home loungers,
nighties or even
match your pillow strips.
Embroidered in simple satin stitch
and outlined to give
a detailed shape on yokes,
hemlines and even on pockets,
these motifs look good not only on plain
fabrics but also on striped suits
with a plain front yoke.
Here are four lovely ideas for
you to choose from!



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WOMEN WEAVERS OF M.P.

S. Holkar

Years of training and strict adherence to tradition go into the making of a weaver. In Maheshwar the women weavers have a tradition of two centuries behind them and they are no less expert at making sarees than their male counterparts elsewhere in the country

If you have worn a saree all your life, you are accustomed to the feel of tucking it, pleating it, smoothing and patting it into place, and adjusting it over your head and shoulders almost automatically. Spread it out one day and think about how it was made.

No idea? What goes where? How to spread it? How does it lie on the loom?

Well, start by spreading it as though it flowed out from your shoulders in a straight line before you. You are then viewing the saree as a weaver views his 'warp', or the hundreds of threads between which he will lace his 'weft' with the criss-cross of the shuttle thread. Every time that the shuttle flies across the loom, the sleigh follows it with a thud, pushing one thread tightly against another.

There are so many possibilities. You can alternate the colour of the weft thread and produce a two-colour stripe. A fat stripe or a thin stripe is simply a matter of how many times the shuttle carries each colour across the warp.

Checks, stripes, solid colours, plain borders or fancy; it all depends upon the skill of the weaver and, more important, upon what the weaver's father and grandfather had learned from their ancestors. Weavers are very tradition-bound; they are slow to change. Their income has always been derived from doing the same thing over and over again and doing it well. The weaver gets up in the morning, washes, eats, and immediately sits down at the loom.

Perhaps his wife has replaced him at the loom for a couple hours in the afternoon. By six p.m. the saree is cut from the loom, taken to the baniya and exchanged for the money with which the weaver will buy the next day's food.

If it is a silk saree with 'buttis' and intricate brocade work, it may take days, even months over the same six-yard warp, advancing by as little as two or three inches of cloth per day.

What a transformation takes place betweeen the unkempt bundle of raw yarn and the finished saree! Seven to ten days are spent just preparing that yarn before it reaches the loom. Messy bundles must be unwound and rewound into tidy coils, dyed, rewound, smoothed, stretched, starched and then twisted thread by thread onto the trailing ends of the last saree that was cut from the loom.

How does a weaver learn his trade? Usually by sitting at his father's loom, or in some cases, his mother's. Weaving is very much a woman's work in some parts of India. Elsewhere, women relieve their menfolk at the looms for short periods, or help in the preparation of yarn.

There are a few places in India where sarees are woven entirely by women. Maheshwar in Madhya Pradesh is one such place. There an attempt to bolster rural employment is bearing fruit on the banks of the Narmada. Twelve women sit from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at looms installed in the former 'Lingarchan' of Maharani Ahilyabai Holkar's fort.

The work is not always easy. At this training-cum-production centre, each woman must learn every step in the weaving process. She must also learn to weave within three months quality cloth which can be sold by the centre to pay for her next nine months' stipend.

It was Ahilyabai who first brought weavers to Maheshwar in the 18th century, supported them with her patronage and helped develop the sober geometric borders which are woven in Maheshwar to this day. Steeped in tradition, these women are weaving their way towards a future which holds hope of financial security and continuity in a proud tradition.

Each woman, on completing her training, will be able to supplement the family income by several hundred rupees per month. The weavers have formed a co-operative and they plan to export sarees and keep in touch with fashion trends in the Indian and foreign markets.

ABOVE: Granma demonstrates the technique of strenghtening the warp threads before weaving.

LEFT: A young woman doing 'jorni' (joining the new warp threads to the old). The task occupies her for two days now; when she is an expert she will do it in four hours.

DIWALI S

The fashion cry for this year'
American georgette sarees, embroider
work of silver and gold zari. The
rich embroidery in silver zari, set the pace
different moods and occasions.
guests when they d

Right for every occasion — you'll look your prettiest in this navy blue organza saree, with huge floral sprays embroidered at intervals along the width of the saree; the green pin-dotted organza has a black appliqued border with tiny embroidered flowers in pretty shades; the third is an orange American georgette saree, which has leaves beautifully appliqued in silver satin and outlined with silver braid.

RKLERS!

**the latest in chiffons and
in vibrant colours with intricate
as, printed and combined with
son. These sarees lend themselves t
chorus compliments from your
Happy Diwali!**

Sparkle on a happy occasion — in a black and red printed organza saree with a gorgeous pallav, delicately embroidered in silver zari; the turquoise blue chiffon saree has a floral border in pastel shades which continues towards the pallav edge. The border and the design are outlined with silver braid. The striking yellow American georgette saree has delicate embroidery which enhances the beauty of the colourful appliqued border and pallav.

**Courtesy : Krishna Embroidery,
Carnac Bridge, Bombay.**

Photographs : Girish Sawale

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Continued from page 17

THE LETTER

But as soon as she turned she heard a voice chirp behind her, "Aunti, Renudidi is lying. I saw her taking out a letter from the letterbox." As Renu stood transfixed, she heard another voice addressing her mother, "Yes, Shanta, just as we were coming up to your house we saw Renu take out an envelope from the letterbox and clasp it to her heart. After that she opened the letter, read it and hid it under the pallav of her sari. At once I thought that Renu's behaviour was very sinister and my belief was confirmed when I came in and heard her telling you that there was no letter. Hah! No mail indeed!" concluded the voice triumphantly.

Renu turned slowly, as her mother, who had emerged from the kitchen along with her grandmother, called her sharply. She did not have to look at the arrivals to know who they were. She knew those two voices too well. They belonged to Leela, their neighbour, and her little son Papu.

She knew what was making Leela so pleased with herself. It was Leela's favourite pastime to poke her nose into other people's business. She took a sadistic pleasure in seeing others in difficult positions and liked nothing better than passing around some juicy piece of gossip. The present situation was simply a godsend for her. No one in Renu's family really liked Leela, but they put up with her as she was a long-time neighbour.

"Renu, is this true? Did you really hide a letter?" grandmother asked in a voice full of dismay.

"Yes," Renu had to admit.

"Oh God! Then what made you tell a lie?"

"It wasn't a lie. I only meant to say that there was nothing for any of you."

"All the same, you could have said that there was only one letter and that it was for you. Why did you have to hide it from your elders?"

These words, coming from Leela, broke Renu's self-control. She had been seething inwardly for the past few minutes. Her mother and grandmother could no doubt ask for an explanation regarding this matter, but could they not wait a little? Why did they have to question her in aunt Leela's presence? And aunt Leela herself sitting in judgement on her was absolutely the last straw.

Renu brought the letter out from under her pallav in a flash and waved it before the onlookers. "Yes, there is a letter and it is for me. As a letter is something private I think I have a right to keep it to myself. Why I should be expected to make a public announcement about any letter I receive is beyond my comprehension," she protested.

Renu's mother stood aghast. Renu was the most obedient and soft spoken among her children, and she had never before witnessed such an outburst from her daughter.

"Perhaps the letter is from Asha, or Nandita, or some other friend of yours whom we know?" mother tried to probe gently.

"It is from no one you know," Renu remarked flatly and from her attitude it was quite evident that she was in no mood to supply any further information. Grandmother was quite shaken by the happenings of the last few minutes. "None of this is like our Renu," she said dolefully. "I have never known her to do anything surreptitiously, and raising her voice in front of her elders is unthinkable."

At this point Leela chose to speak again. "Who knows what other unthinkable things are to follow?" she asked loudly. "Today she is hiding that letter and rebuking you when it is she who is caught lying, maybe tomorrow she will elope!"

"Elope!" exclaimed mother and grandmother together in shocked voices. Renu herself was too stunned for speech.

Leela, who appeared pleased with the effect her words had produced, continued with obvious relish. "What else can you expect? That is no ordinary letter as you can see from her attempt to conceal it and also from her adamant attitude. I bet it is a love letter. People in love are known to behave strangely, and then, most probably the person who has written this letter is not some one you would approve of. That accounts for her being so flurried."

"When you try to dissuade her from seeing this fellow," went on Leela like a pucca detective, "in all probability she will elope with him. Many young girls do that nowadays, bringing shame to their families."

Leela may have said something more, but suddenly a booming voice was heard.

"Which family are you talking about? Leela, is this the latest addition to your gossip bulletin?"

It was Renu's father back from the hospital a bit early.

"She is speaking about our Renu," said mother in a broken whisper. "Our Renu and shame? What kind of a joke is this?"

"This is no joke!" exclaimed Leela and went on to describe the incident in detail. She didn't even leave out her own dismal conjectures about the fate of Renu and the family.

As soon as she stopped speaking, grandmother burst out, "Did you hear that? If you ask me, you and your father are the ones to be blamed for this. You two have spoilt Renu no end, and then, you had to send her to a co-education college much against my wishes, saying that it is the best college in town. Now, God only knows what fate awaits us." She choked on the last words as tears of apprehension welled up in her eyes.

Leela's and grandmother's monologues had left father utterly bewildered. When he managed to find his tongue, he said, "Our Renu surely can't do anything as disgraceful as eloping. There must be. . ."

But he could not finish the sentence as Leela hastily interrupted him.

"May be Renu won't elope," she said, shaking her head. "Elopement isn't the only possible conclusion in such cases. I remember my cousin Malati telling me only the other day about her friend's daughter. The girl had got involved with a thoroughly undesirable fellow. When her parents ordered her to stop seeing the boy, she obeyed them quietly. But a few days later they found her dead. She had taken an overdose of sleeping tablets."

"Oh no!" exclaimed mother almost in tears, and grandmother sobbed openly.

At this crucial moment grandfather's frail voice floated down to them from upstairs.

"What is all this commotion I hear? Renu dear, will you please come here and tell me what the trouble is?"

Renu who had been standing numbly for the last few minutes was brought to life by these words. She wheeled around and raced up the stairs thinking at the same time. "Thank heavens for Grandfather."

She rushed to him, knelt down by his armchair and blurted out the whole story. By the time her father and the rest of them climbed the stairs, she had finished her narration and was saying, "Now, I will give you the letter, grandfather. Read the contents for yourself and judge if I in any way deserve all the abuse that was being showered upon me."

Grandfather took the letter from Renu's outstretched hand as the others watched breathlessly. As he read on, a smile broke on his face. He put the letter down, and turning to Renu he asked, "If this is what all the fuss was about then why didn't you just tell them about it and put matters at rest?"

"It was like this grandfather," replied Renu. "When I read the letter I was so overwhelmed with happiness that I wanted to be alone for a few minutes to collect my thoughts. After that I would have told you all about it. You have heard what happened while I was trying to get to my room. Aunt Leela accusing me all of a sudden and both mother and grandmother immediately siding with her, put my back up. I am sorry for being rude and for behaving a bit childishly about this letter."

At this point grandmother could no longer contain herself. "Will you two please stop talking in riddles and tell us what is in that letter?" she demanded.

"Oh sure!" replied grandfather turning to her with a twinkle in his eyes. "The matter is really very simple. Our Renu has turned out to be a writer."

"A what?" inquired all the voices in unison.

"A 'writer,' that's what I said. It seems this young lady has been trying her hand at writing for some time on the sly. This letter is from the editor of a well-known magazine informing Renu that they have accepted a short story from her for publication."

He paused for breath and then added, "This is not an occasion for rebukes and tears, but one that calls for celebration."

Grandfather's words had almost a magical effect on the rest of the family. Grandmother wiped away her tears and beamed at Renu. Father was the first one to congratulate her. The relief and happiness that showed on his face was mirrored on mother's face as well. Kalu, driven by curiousity, was hovering near. Father beckoned to him and handed him two ten rupee notes. "Go and get some good sweets," he ordered. "And be quick about it."

In their joy, everybody except Renu had become oblivious of Leela's presence. Only Renu had noticed with pleasure how drastically Leela's expression had changed on hearing grandfather's announcement. Her face was now a study in disappointment and anger. Her rage was vented on poor Papu. "Come along, you lazy child. What are you gaping at?"

Giving Papu's hand a vicious pull, she started for the stairs. Renu, who followed her, heard her muttering to herself, "I have a lot of work to do at home and can't sit and listen to these people going ga-ga over some silly letter."

"Aunt Leela," said Renu in a sweet voice from behind, "do stay for a few minutes more and have some sweets. I am sure Kalu won't be very long in getting them."

In reply Leela only glared at Renu and doubled her speed.

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FOR A SWEET DIWALI

Premila Lal

A thaliful of sweets is served traditionally in every Indian house during the festival of lights. Aarti with a decorative rangoli which is made specially for festive occasions, from coloured sago (sabudana) and rice and small deeyas made from coloured flour dough, adorns the centre of a tableful of delectable sweets.
Welcome your relatives and friends with some of these home-made halwas and jalebis.

GAJJAC

30 grams walnuts
30 grams cashewnuts
30 grams melon seeds or chirongi
30 grams peanuts
30 grams pistachios
30 grams pine kernals (chilgoza)
350 grams fine sugar
30 grams pure ghee
½ tsp. pounded cardamom seeds
Few drops essence if desired
Juice of 1 lemon

Roast the nuts together on a tava to slightly brown. Chop the nuts very finely. Dissolve sugar in a tablespoon of water. Add the ghee and stir to a thick syrup. Stir in the lime juice, nuts and cardamom powder. Immediately pour into a greased thali and roll out with a greased rolling pin. Quickly cut into strips before it cools. To keep them crisp, store in airtight containers.

Aarti with rangoli Courtesy : Shobhana Mehta

Photograph : Farokh Reporter.

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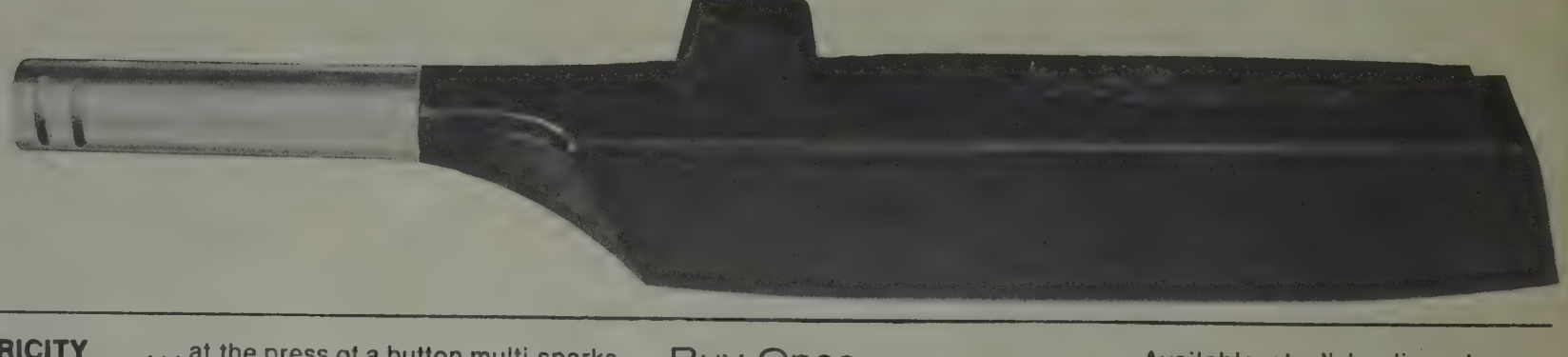

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KARACHI HALWA

250 grams cornflour
1 kg sugar
Juice of 1 lemon
150 grams almonds
75 grams pistachios
30 grams cashewnuts
½ tsp. crushed cardamom seeds
250 grams ghee
Any colouring of your choice

Dissolve sugar in one litre of water. Strain the liquid through a muslin cloth. Dissolve the cornflour in 500 ml. of cold water and add to the syrup. Separate the mixture in two equal parts and colour each as desired (yellow, red and pink are the most popular colours) and cook over medium heat stirring continously till the mixture is a thick lump. Mix lime juice and continue stirring. When the mixture sticks to the bottom of the pan, add a spoon of warm ghee and continue cooking — keep adding a spoon of warm ghee till the mixture completely separates from the sides and bottom of pan. This may take more than half an hour. Add chopped nuts and flavouring — keep a greased thali ready. Pour mixture in the pan and smoothen by applying pressure with an empty bottle to level it out. Sprinkle more nuts and cut into desired shapes when set.

DAL HALWA

350 grams moong dal, soaked in water for 5 hours before use
1 litre milk
450 grams pure ghee
450 grams sugar
½ tsp. saffron, soaked in milk
½ tsp. cardamom crushed
1 tbsp. almonds, sliced, blanched

Drain and wash the dal. Grind it to a paste. Heat the ghee in a pan and fry the dal paste to a pale brown, stirring constantly. Gradually add the milk and continue stirring. Add the sugar and stir until the mixture thickens. Add the saffron. When the mixture separates from the pan, pour into a lightly greased thali and garnish with cardamom and almonds. Cool thoroughly.

MOONG LADDU

1 cup moong dal
2 cups ghee
1½ cups icing sugar
½ cup cashewnuts, chopped
½ cup dry coconut, grated
3 cardamoms, powdered
A few strands saffron, soaked

Fry the dal and pound it to a powder. Use a little ghee to fry the dal flour to a light brown. Stir in the remaining ghee a little at a time. Stir constantly. When all the ghee is used up add the cashewnuts and continue to stir until they become golden brown. Add the cardamom powder, coconut and saffron and remove the pan from the fire. Add the sugar and mix all together until throughly blended. Make lemon-sized balls while the mixture is still hot. Allow it to cool.

ALU MUTTAR HALWA

¼ kg potatoes
½ kg peas, shelled
200 grams sugar
¼ kg ghee
3/4 cup mixed nuts, chopped
1 dtsp. raising
1 tsp. cardamom

Peel the potatoes, wash and grate them. Put grated potato in the cooker with half cup water. Bring to a pressure and cook for half a minute. Drain off water. Put the peas in the cooker with half cup water and cook for two minutes. Drain the peas and keep aside. Put sugar in a dekchi, add a cup of water and allow to boil. Form into a thick syrup. Remove from the fire. Fry the nuts in a little ghee and keep aside.

Heat the remaining ghee and add the potatoes and coarsely mashed peas. Fry for five minutes, add syrup and cook, stirring for 15 minutes. Add nuts and raisins and mix well. Add cardamom and remove from heat. Serve warm, garnished with a few leaves of silver (varakh).

GRAM AND WHEAT HALWA

1 cup gram flour
1 cup wheat flour
1 cup ghee

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3 cups milk
4 cups sugar
1 tbsp. cashewnuts, chopped, fried
Seeds of two cardamoms

Mix the two flours together and put in a pan with the milk on a low fire. Stir frequently to blend and prevent the mixture from forming lumps. When it thickens add the sugar and stir constantly until it thickens. Then add ghee, one spoonful at a time. When the mixture is ready and thick, pour onto a greased plate and sprinkle with the cashewnuts. Flatten the mixture evenly on the plate. Allow to cool and cut into squares.

JALEBIS

½ kg plain flour
1½ kg sugar
A pinch baking powder
A little kesar essence
500 grams ghee

Sift the flour with the baking powder. Then add enough warm water to make a thin batter (similar to bhajia batter). Make a sugar syrup. Add the kesar mixed with a little hot water, to the syrup. Heat the ghee. Pour the batter into a jalebi mould and press it out in circles into the hot ghee. Fry to a nice golden brown. Remove and put immediately into the syrup. Let it soak in this syrup for five to ten minutes.

COOKERY QUEEN OF THE MONTH

Miss Tejendar Matharoo of Assam wins Rs. 100 for this month's best recipe plus a Supercook Gas Tandoor with skewers from M/s Globe Super Parts, a cash prize of Rs. 101/- from Weikfield and a 185 mm non-stick Saucepan from Trupti Industries, Bombay.

CORN ROLLS

10-15 medium sized colocasia leaves
6 fresh corn cobs
Oil for frying
Lemon sized ball of tamarind
4 tsps. sugar
Salt to taste

GRIND TO A PASTE:

½ fresh coconut, grated
4 tsps. curry powder
2 tsps. chilli powder
6 cloves garlic
1" piece ginger

Grate the cobs. Soak tamarind in water and extract juice. Mix grated corn cobs, ground masala paste, tamarind juice, sugar and salt to taste. Add a little water if necessary. Smear the corn paste on each colocasia leaf. Roll and tie with a thread. Steam these rolls for about 15 minutes. When cool cut into round pieces and shallow fry in hot oil till crisp. Serve hot.

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recipes from our readers

Miss Bachu Sinha, Dist Hooghly.

BADSHAHI PARATHA

DOUGH:

400 grams flour (maida)
4 tbsps. ghee
A pinch of salt and water as required
Ghee for frying
2 eggs, beaten

FOR THE FILLING:

200 grams minced meat
2 large potatoes, boiled and smashed
2 tsps. curd
2 medium size onions, finely sliced
1 tsp. sugar
½ tsp. chilli powder
1 green chilli
½ tsp. turmeric powder
½ tsp. coriander and cummin seed powder

Salt to taste

GRIND TO A PASTE:

1 small size onion
2 cms ginger
8-10 cloves garlic

Sift flour. Add salt and rub in the fat. Make a very smooth dough. Heat oil in kerahi and fry the sliced onion. Add the ground paste, curd, chilli and turmeric powder, salt, sugar and powdered masala. Fry until brown. Then add the boiled minced meat and potatoes. Fry for a while. After 10 minutes remove from the fire and keep aside.

Now make lemon size ball from the dough. Roll it into a thin chappati. Put two tablespoons of beaten egg all over the roll and then put some filling in the centre in a triangular shape. Turn the edges towards the centre and fold into triangular shape. Press the three corners taking care, the egg does not ooze out. Deep fry in ghee till light brown. Serve hot with sliced onions and chutney or tomato ketchup.

Mrs. Usha Chatterjee, Calcutta.

HUSAINI CURRY

250 grams boneless mutton, cut into small rounds
8 small size onions, cut into rounds
50 grams ginger, cut into fine rounds
1 medium tomato
½ medium onion, chopped
10-12 sticks, cut into 3" or 5" in length
5-6 tbsps. ghee or oil

GRIND TOGETHER:

2 tbsps. coriander seeds
3-4 dry red chillis
¼ tsp. white cummin seeds
2-4 corns whole pepper
½" piece turmeric
5-6 cloves garlic
½" piece ginger

GRIND SEPARATELY:

2 small cardamoms
1 clove
2 cinnamon sticks

Take each stick and insert a piece of mutton followed by a slice of onion and ginger. If a larger stick is used repeat the above process. Continue till all the meat is used up.

Heat ghee and fry half of the chopped onion till golden brown. Add the chopped tomato and fry well till oil oozes out. Now add the ground masala paste and fry once more with a sprinkle of water till the ghee separates. Add the prepared sticks, fry again. Add sufficient water for a thick gravy. Cook till meat is tender.

Before serving sprinkle powdered masala on top. Serve on a flat dish garnished with the remaining cut onion rings.

Miss Reena Abraham, Trivandrum.

DEVIL CURRY

600 grams roast meat (pork)
4 cups water with 1 chicken cube
5 slices bacon — cut into 5 cm. (2") lengths
4 long beans — cut into 5 cm. (2") lengths
1 small carrot cut into short stalks about (1½") 3.7 cm.
1 large onion sliced
1 tsp. mustard powder
2 tbsps. rice vinegar
Salt to taste
4 tbsps. oil
1 tsp. sugar

GRIND TO A FINE PASTE:

3 cloves garlic
18 medium size onions
4 almonds (optional)
12 dry chillis
1 tsp. fresh mustard seeds

Heat oil in an earthenware pot.

Fry sliced onion for few minutes. Add in the ground paste and fry till light brown. Add the roasted pork pieces and continue frying. Add water and bring to a boil.

When the meat is tender add vegetables together with bacon, vinegar and mustard powder. Bring to a boil. Finally add salt and sugar to taste.

1 weekly winner

Mrs. Malini Ghosh of Assam wins Rs. 50- for this week's best recipe plus a non-stick coated 7" Cake Mould from Trupti Industries and a gift hamper from Weikfield.

PRAWNS BAKED IN GREEN COCONUT

½ kg prawns
1 medium sized green coconut in which a thin layer of kernal (coconut malai) has formed
1 tsp. mustard seeds
A pinch of turmeric powder
A little mustard oil
A few green chillis
A little flour
Salt to taste

Shell and clean prawns thoroughly. Keep aside in a colander for the water to drain out completely.

Now take the green coconut and cut the lid and keep aside. Empty the water from the coconut.

Grind the mustard seeds with one green chilli, a pinch of salt and a pinch of turmeric powder to a fine paste. Apply this paste to the cleaned prawns. Add a little mustard oil and salt to taste. Mix properly. Put this masala-mixed prawns into the coconut and seal the lid with a little paste made from the flour.

Bake the coconut for approximately three to four hours or till the outer shell turns brown. (This is best baked inside a coal chula). Cook without water. When done, remove lid and scoop out the prawns. Serve hot with rice. Can be baked in an oven and served in the shell.

COOKERY CONTESTANTS!

Revised Contest Rules

1. Each recipe must be accompanied by this coupon.
2. The author of each selected entry will be informed in advance and requested to send a passport size photograph of herself to be published along with her recipe.
3. The recipe must be original and not copied from a cookery book, a magazine or any other published material. The prize-winner shall have to sign a declaration to that effect before the announcement is made and the prize awarded.

Address your entries to the Cookery Editor, Eve's Weekly, Bombay Samachar Marg, Bombay-400 023.

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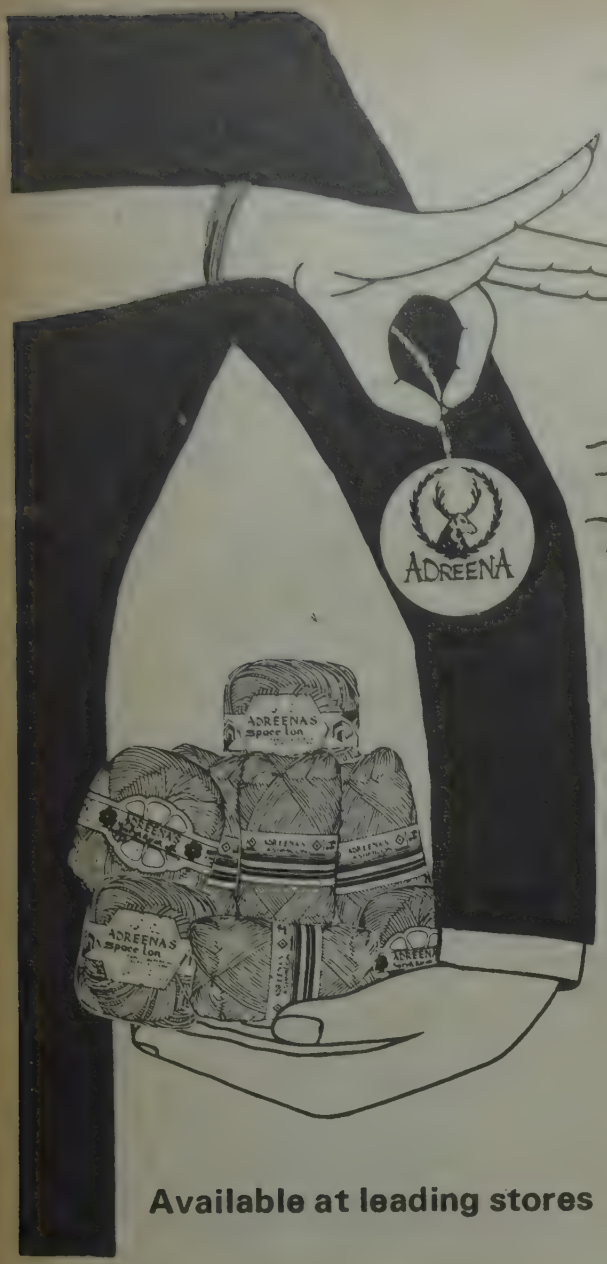

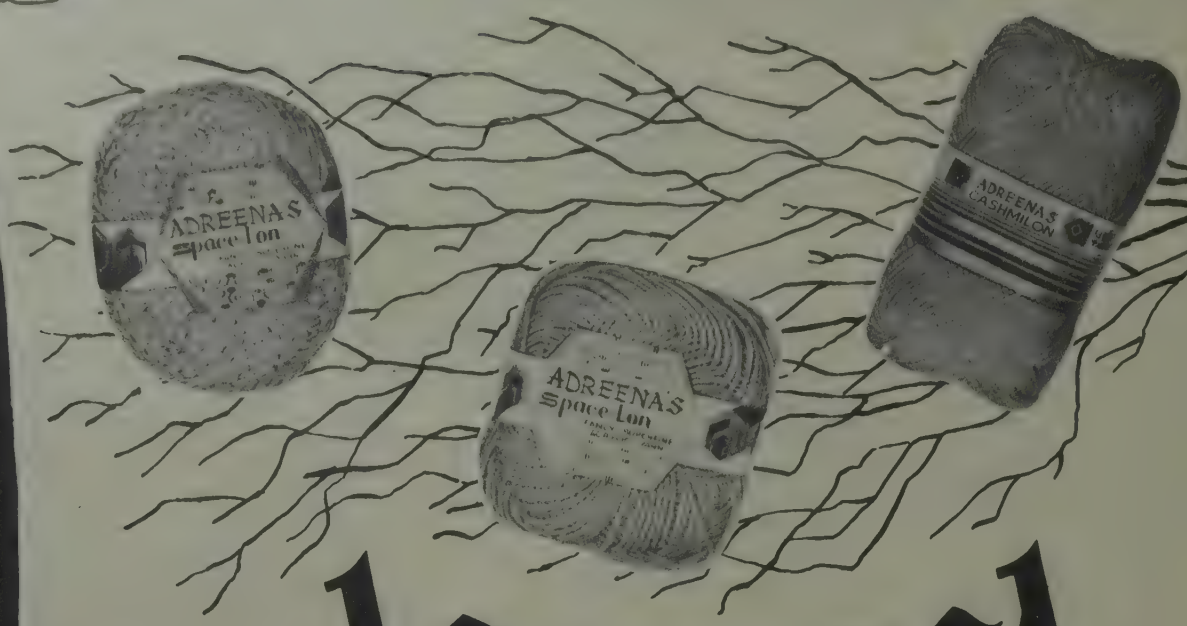

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TRAVEL WRITERS: carrying happy tales

The 22nd convention of the Society of American Travel Writers was held in New Delhi recently. It was the first time that the society was holding a convention in Asia. It was inaugurated at the Ashoka Hotel by Mr. P.C. Chunder, Union Minister for Education, Culture and Social Welfare.

More than 240 delegates, including editors, writers and photographers of various American travel magazines, attended the convention. It was hoped that these writers would explode the myth that India was a land only of snake charmers and elephants, and present it to the rest of the world in a modern light.

Besides the discussions, sightseeing and shopping, there were many receptions and parties hosted in honour of the SATW delegates. One of the highlights was the presentation of the audio-visual show, "Discovery of India", by Alan Fernandes of I.T.D.C. The show was choreogrophed by Tanushree and the music was composed by Anand Shanker. Another very pleasant occasion was Veena Shroff's demonstration of hairstyles. She chose as her model the pretty dancer Sonal Mansingh and, for the males, she did a lovely style on Alan Fernandes.

Hotel Maurya hosted a Fashion Fantasy organised by Satish Gujral, and Mr. C.B. Jain, Director of Tourism, and Mrs. Jain hosted a lavish dinner party at the Ashoka which was followed by a fashion show, Brides and Bridegrooms of India, presented by the Ashoka cultural wing. The delegates presented a cheque for Rs. 10,000 for flood relief.

Shirley Rose Higgins

H. W. Richard Newman

Monique Des-Roches

SHIRLEY ROSE HIGGINS

Eve's Weekly talked to some of the glittering personalities at the SATW convention. Shirley Rose Higgins does a column in the **Daily Tribune** on Travel-shopping. Rugs are her passion and she was very impressed with Kashmiri carpets and namdhas. She is also an expert shoppers' guide on handicrafts. She thought Mexican embroidery was fabulous, as were wall hangings from Turkey and Egypt. Shirley spent hours at the various emporia in the city and was so "fascinated" she did not know what not to buy. Everything looked so gorgeous. Wherever Shirley went there was a bunch of men trailing her. "Follow Shirley and you will buy the best."

H.W. RICHARD NEWMAN

H. W. Richard Newman writes on travel and music. His columns in the Ontario (Canda) **Free Press** daily are avidly read. He also writes for periodicals in Detroit (U.S). He has a passion for classical music from all over the world. "Your Ravi Shanker is tremendous," he said.

According to him, Canadians are the most travelled people in the world. He finds Indian women "gentle and beautiful and so is the Indian culture". Greece is his favourite country. "It has both the old world charm and the glamour of modern times."

MONIQUE NLIYTEMANS DES-ROCHES

Monique writes in French and is a free-lance travel writer. She lives in Montreal and contributes to several leading magazines and newspapers. She loves the Orient. This was her first visit to India although she had been to Tokyo, Hongkong and Thailand last year. Monique is the cultural secretary of the SATW. "We are striving to get writers interested in the cultural aspects of a country — not just the hotels or airlines. Our first interest should be people and culture. Specialisation in travel writing and the arts and culture must be combined." She found India beautiful and the people most relaxed.

FRANKIE KEATING

Frankie Keating forms a world-famous team of photographers with her husband. They are free-lancers. She had come to India earlier this year to pick up 'Spots' for the convention. Both husband and wife travelled to Jaipur, Varanasi, Khajuraho, Trivandrum and the Kovalam Beach. "I am not a beach lover, but Kovalam fascinated me. The ayurvedic oil massage at the Kovalam I.T.D.C. complex is unforgettable. I wish I had the time to go there again." She was on an assignment to photograph the Gir lions. Her husband will do the story.

Pushpa Hans

The opening scene from the ballet "Discovery of India" which was presented at the inauguration of the SATW convention.

YAKSHAGANA: gods, demons and 'lib'

The Yakshagana dance-drama of Kasargod, Kerala, has been a fiercely-held male preserve for several centuries. Purists were shocked and indignant when a troupe of young women recently liberated it from the male stranglehold

B. Radhakrishna Rao

The conflict between devas and rakshasas in Yakshagana is now becoming a battle of the sexes. "Tradition debased," scream male chauvinists, but the women are undaunted.

Many eyebrows were raised when a bold and innovative team of young women, all of them under twenty, and most of them studying in college, staged the popular dance-drama of Yakshagana at the recently concluded Kasargod Taluka Kannada Women's Conference. Predictably, angry male chauvinists resented this female incursion into what was till then a strictly male preserve.

Soon word went round that the gatecrashing by women into the domain of Yakshagana portends a disturbing trend: it would not only upset the tradition handed down the centuries and debase the sanctity of Yakshagana, but would also dampen the enthusiasm of foreign admirers of this vibrant folk art.

And, as if to substantiate this strange argument, Miss Martha Ashton, an American exponent of Yakshagana who has conducted intensive research into the various aspects of this South Kanara based dance-drama, under the guidance of Dr. K. Shivarama Karanth, a renowned Kannada writer and authority on folk arts of South Kanara, opined that what attracted foreigners to India is its culture in its tradional sanctity and pristine purity; that any attempt at breaking the tradition to introduce new trends would dampen the interest of foreigners in these Indian arts.

Miss Ashton did not spare even her own guru when he, with a view to enhancing the splendour and versatility of Yakshagana, till then dependent on Hindu mythological lore alone for its substance and theme, tried to introduce Biblical themes.

Undaunted, the women's troupe is going ahead with its ambitious plan of attracting more and more women to participate in Yakshagana to break the male stranglehold on this dance-drama.

Kasargod, a flourishing coastal town with a polyglot population at the northern end of Kerala, but formerly a part of South Kanara, has a great tradition of breaking traditions. It is in keeping with this unorthdox heritage that the female troupe deemed it fit to stage its maiden performance of Yakshagana in its very birth place, which incidentally, is Kasargod.

Yakshagana resembles in many respects the traditional theatre of Japan, Kabuki, in which women are not allowed to take part. As in Kabuki, so in Yakshagana, males play female roles complete with elaborate wigs and costumes, and some of the artistes both in Yakshagana and Kabuki have dedicated their career to perfecting the female roles.

Mr. Dhoopad, an eminent authority on Yakshagana, has his own explanation as to why women were denied any role in Yakshagana: "Women were not usually allowed to act in public in olden days. Only in Sanskrit plays do we hear of women playing the female roles."

Yakshagana is a rustic dance drama popular in the palm fringed South Kanara district. It is unsurpassed in creating an illusion of battle between gods and devils, mostly through dialogue, gesture and music. Though Yakshagana originated in Kasargod, owing to lack of patronage in its birth place, most of the artistes were forced to migrate to other parts of South Kanara where Yakshagana has been flourishing since. A composite mixture of music, song, dance and dialogue, this virile dance-drama gives ample scope for our rich rural talent.

The rainy season over, the days are bright and beautiful. The rural youth, after a back breaking spell of agricultural operations, finds ample leisure and time hangs heavily on its hands. The energy and creative talent inherent in them have to find an outlet. And so village after village in the district reverberates to the drums heralding the Yakshagana season.

Enthusiasm and excitement pervades the rural atmosphere. Out in the fields, from where only a few days back a golden harvest of paddy had been reaped, an improvised pandal, decorated with gorgeously coloured cloth strips and mango leaves, springs up in no time. Soon night spreads its dense, dark wings all around and a steady stream of men, women and children makes a beeline to the pandal where Yakshagana is to be enacted in a couple of hours.

The stage is ready for Yakshagana and suddenly there appears a gaudily dressed buffoon carrying an idol of Lord Ganesha, the remover of obstacles in the Hindu pantheon. After propitiation of Lord Ganesha by the Bhagavatharu, who is director, singer, narrator and stage manager all rolled into one, the Yakshagana starts to unfold. The role of the Bhagavatharu is strenuous in that he has to sit cross legged and sing and explain throughout the night-long play. Though the themes of Yakshagana are as old as the Ramayana and Mahabharatha, its splendid presentation and impromptu dialogue keep the audience spell bound. Essentially, Yakshagana depicts the eternal conflict between good and evil, between the gods and the rakshasas, in which the gods always triumph.

While the hero, symbolising good and godly qualities, enters with a calm poise and noble demeanour, the demon representing evil bursts on the scene with a thundering, roaring noise. Fierce gestures build up an atmosphere of confrontation between the divine and the demon.

As a rule the demon does not say anything; he only screams and whirls round and round, making awesome gestures and weird, threatening sounds. With his face heavily painted and lined with rice flour in various designs, and a thick, ferocious moustache, the demon has a frightening look.

Because of its terrifying scenes, Yakshagana is compared to Shiva Tandava, the terror filled cosmic dance of Shiva. What lends freshness and versatility to Yakshagana is the practice of carrying on the dialogue extempore.

But there is little stagecraft in Yakshagana because of the extempore speeches and improvised acting. Dance steps are practised according to the whim and fancy of the character. Hanuman who, in the first flush of enthusiasm when he first makes his appearance, displays a vigorous round of movements, when tired, simply twists his tail around without moving. But it is just this freedom from regimentation and a tight script that is at the root of vigour, vitality and versatiliy of Yakshagana.

In recent years, widespread interest has been evinced in this unique dance-drama. Martha Ashton stayed in South Kanara for 14 months to study the intricacies of Yakshagana under the guidance of Dr. Shivarama Karanth. A monogram on Yakshagana produced by her is outstanding for its originality, minute details and scholarly interpretation. It is hoped that with the entry of females now, the dance drama will acquire a new splendour, colour and interest.

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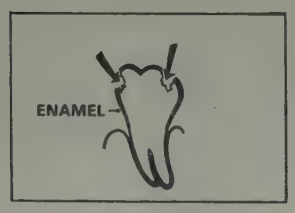

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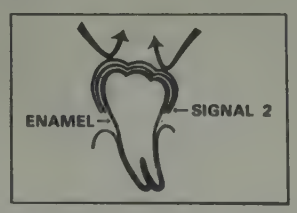

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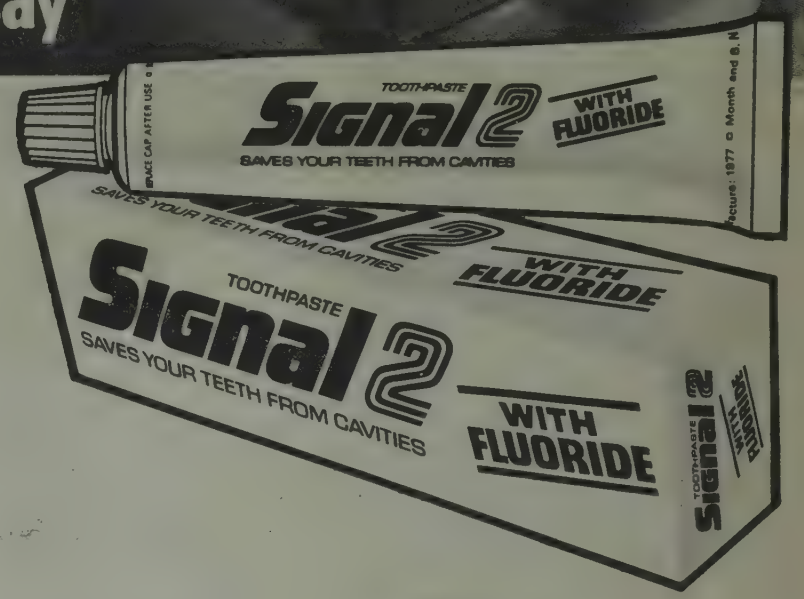

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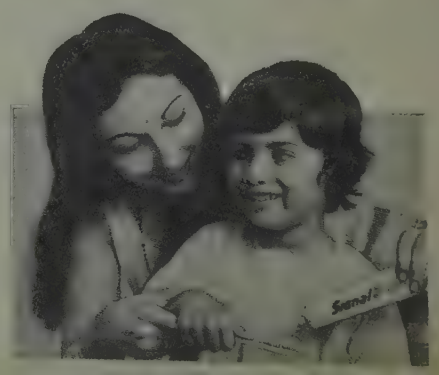

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gran's best friend

Ruskin Bond

In the **Odyssey**, Homer describes the return of Ulysses after more than a decade of wandering over land and sea. Shabbily dressed, battered by adversity, and looking much older, he was not recognised by friends or relatives. But his ancient dog, Argos, a mongrel "full of vermin", who was lying outside the door of the house, heard his master's voice as Ulysses approached. The dog "raised up his head and pricked up his ears, even where he lay. He wagged his tail and dropped both his ears, but nearer to his master he had not the strength to draw." Then, Homer tells us, Ulysses "looked aside and wiped away a tear." The faithful dog had lived to the age of nineteen, waiting for his master to return.

All dogs are potentially faithful, but the mongrel, or "pie" — or mixed-breed, as he should really be called — has, one cannot help feeling, more loyalty than most.

I grew up amongst animals, in a small town in the Himalayan foothills. My parents kept pedigreed Dachshunds and Dalmatians, and sold pups to the affluent. But it was my grandmother's mongrel, Crazy, who was always the first to recognise me when I returned home once a year from boarding-school. No sooner had I entered the gate than he would dash up the path, leaping and slobbering all over me, while the other more fancy breeds were still wondering what was happening.

He was really Grandmother's dog, and trailed her wherever she went; but he was a boy's dog too, and appreciated the long walks we took together — down pine-covered slopes to the stream and then into the oak and rhododendron forest where he would go chasing after hares and pine-martens. He was very much an outdoor dog, preferring to sleep on the verandah rather than inside the house. Any untoward noise or disturbance would set him barking, and this barking would go on almost all night. Although we grumbled at the noise he made, we were secretly glad that he was always alert and that he made his presence known in so positive a manner. We never had burglars.

On one excursion into the hills, Crazy and I surprised a bear in a corn field. The bear ran towards us, giving angry little grunts. While I ran for safety, Crazy danced round the bear, yapping fiercely but keeping well out of reach of its claws. The bear, probably finding this kind of play beneath his dignity, turned round and ambled away. Crazy then came after me, tail wagging joyfully — he'd found it all great fun — and we crossed the stream together.

Today pedigreed dogs are in great demand. Some dog-owners can trace their own family trees back no more than two or three generations but won't be satisfied with a dog that doesn't boast a pedigree going back to the Hundred Years War between England and France. But, as Grandmother always said, a good dog is a good dog, regardless of its parentage; and in terms of **character**, a good mongrel has no equal.

I know I owe a great deal to Crazy. He helped to give me a happy childhood, a sense of adventure, an appreciation of true friendship, and a gift for giving (and receiving) love without judgement or reservation.

Grandmother took no notice of remarks that her dog was just a "pie". She'd had him for ten years and knew his worth. When he leapt on to the garden wall and paced up and down it, no monkey or langur dared raid the peach trees. When he stretched himself out on the verandah steps, seemingly enjoying a midday siesta, his lassitude was deceptive. No stranger approached without being challenged.

When the family was about to emigrate to Australia, Grandmother was told that her dog would not be allowed into that country.

"In that case," she said, "the rest of you can carry on without me. I'm in no hurry to reach Australia. If the law about dogs changes, let me know."

Grandmother was no student of Hindu mythology, but there is a parallel in the story of King Yudhisthira in the **Mahabharata**. (As with the **Odyssey**, no epic is complete without a dog.)

King Yudhisthira was on his way to the "upper world" — you could call it Heaven — accompanied by a dog he had befriended on the way.

"It is quite impossible to let a dog enter heaven," said god Indra, who also had strict rules regarding entry. "You will be guilty of no cruelty if you leave the dog behind."

"On the contrary," said Yudhisthira, "I should be guilty of a most dishonourable deed if I were to abandon my four-footed friend. I once made a vow that I would never betray a friend. And even for the sake of obtaining eternal bliss, I will not break that vow."

It was the dog — a mongrel, naturally — who resolved the issue. He had been meekly standing by, but now he underwent a wonderful change.

"I am Dharma, the god of Duty," he said. "And I am greatly pleased, O prince, with your faithfulness and devotion. Even when I came to you in the form of a dog, you would not forsake me, and called me friend. Now I know that you are prepared to give up a place in heaven rather than be false to what is right."

In the same way, Grandmother was prepared to give up her place in Australia. As a destination, it is probably not in the same class as heaven, but it has its charms, and there were obvious advantages in the family going there.

But Grandmother was not to be moved.

"I'm happy here, with my garden and friends," she said.

We knew it was really because of Crazy that she would not leave.

"Don't worry," she said. "We'll manage."

And they did.

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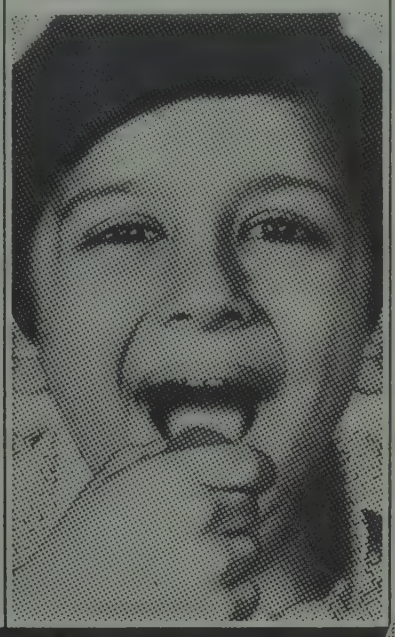

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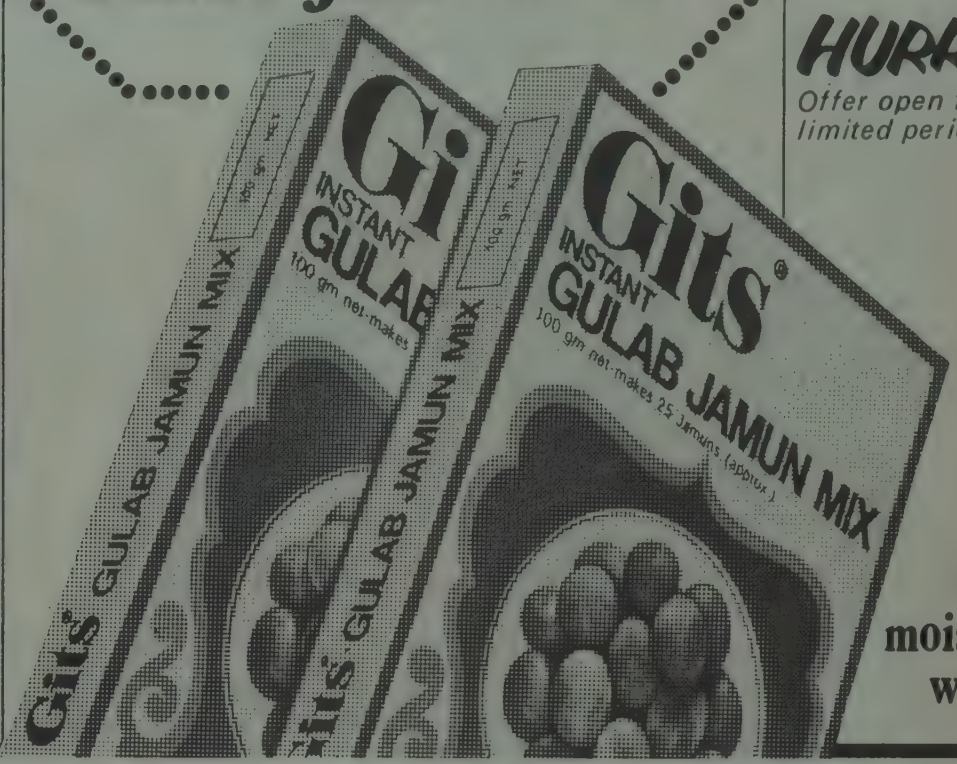

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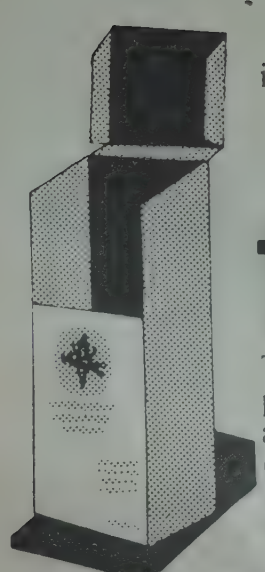

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"I ONLY WORK WHERE I FEEL COMFORTABLE"

"I need a good director and encouragement. I can't just switch on and off, and I get the jitters in a strange place, where the people are new and the methods alien to me. Which is why I am very choosy about assignments."

Vijaya Irani

My first glimpse of Smita was hrough the glass partition of he dubbing-theatre. She was ressed in slacks-and-shirt and er hair was knotted high in a usiness-like way. Her voice, as came through the speaker, ad a familia, softness about it. watched her scene come on he screen repeatedly till she got er lines perfectly matched with he lip movements.

With the first greeting, I de-ded I was going to like this irl. I already appreciated her s an artiste. And I got to like er as a person as well while e chatted about various things nd in particular about how she elt now that she had signed up ith a top production company ke Mushir-Riaz for their very mbitious "Shakti", with a dis-nguished star line-up — Dilip umar, Raakhee and Amitabh achchan. The film is directed y Ramesh Sippy from a script-creenplay by Salim-Javed. The ombination spells something eally great.

For an artiste who has estab-shed her talent through the art-lm ("Nishant", "Bhumika", Manthan") to get a role in a ig commercial set-up is consid-red a big achievement. Not nany stars-in-the-running, even the commercial bracket, have een so fortunate.

"I have been doing a commer-ial film with Shashi and Shaba-a for the past three years," mita said. There were many ffers from the commercial mar-et, but she had not accepted hem as their scripts were weak nd she had not much to do in hem.

"Look, I am not a profession-l artiste — in the sense that I m not in films on a career-pro-noting trip, or for money, or for tatus. I like to choose my work. can only work where I feel omfortable; where the unit is ike a family, everything is in-ormal. I can sit and discuss my cript or the scene with my dir-ctor, like Shyam (Benegal)) or Govind from the unit, and they ave the time to hear me out. The main thing is that I have to feel comfortable. . . and secure. With the bigger film set-ups, here is no time for anyone to lo anything except rush through he shifts. I blame the star-sys-em and I hate it too.

"I am not a professional in an-ther sense, too. I cannot think oo much ahead about my move-ents and dialogue-delivery, tho-ugh I must have the script in hand. I don't pre-plan what I am going to do for a particular scene. And, oh my God, I do need at least three rehearsals before I give my takes or my dubbing-lines. I invariably muck up my lines. I need a good director and patience and encouragement from the people I am working with. And then I cannot just switch on and off. It strikes me from within and then I do the scene, bungling it as usual at the first rehearsal. This kind of working is okay with smaller units and more dedicated directors. The art-film directors never take up more than two films at a time and then they work only on one film thoroughly, complete it and then start the next one. I can function better this way. Tell me, who among the high-staked, commercial brackets can afford to do this? They never have the time with all the commitments they take on. How can they have the patience for my kind of working — or vice versa?"

All right, so she is the eternal and committed old faithful to the art-film. I asked her about "Shakti". There she had a highly educated, sophisticated and seasoned team of workers — what did she have to fear?

"So that's why I took it up... maybe," she said. "Ramesh Sippy is very nice, dedicated and patient and I know he has just this film and his own 'Shaan' in hand. And if they needed me to line-up with such artistes as Dilip Kumar, Raakhee and Amitabh Bachchan, it is a big credit to me. I have only a brief outline of my role — I play a middle-class girl opposite Amitabh. I have done three days' work with them — and I didn't feel too easy. I always get the jitters in a strange place, where the people are new and the methods alien to me."

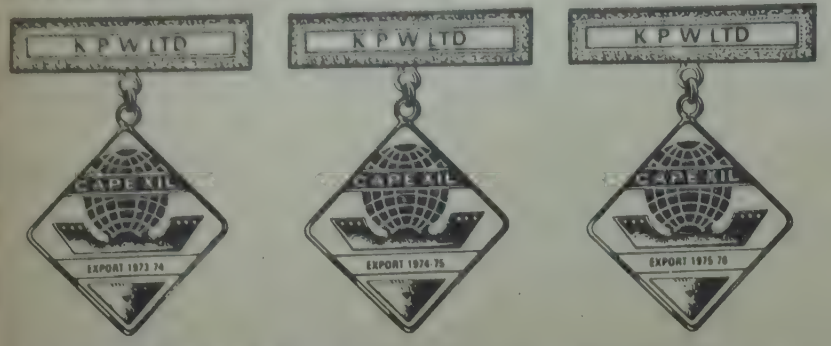
It is this unusual sensitivity that makes Smita take her roles very seriously, to strive to do her best. It also makes her cautious in estimating her performances; she has to be "sure". She had to see "Bhumika" six times before she "kind of" appreciated her performance. "I thought I wasn't too bad," she said with a slight smile. Bad! I exclaimed. I thought each frame was a poem in intensity and originality.

"I am not too fond of blowing up money the way I am expected to. I don't have a passion for clothes, or shoes or perfumes or eating out at big restaurants. What I do love is being home, eating simple, hot, home-cooked food. Yes, I do spend money on my car, my friends and a lot of books. I like to be with genuine people; I can see through false, flattering people the minute I spot them. I am attached to the very few friends I have. I like to go to Pune where I spent my first 17 years; the smells of the city, the atmosphere keep calling me back. I am hopelessly attached to it."

Great things are in store for Smita, though she herself shrugs off her achievements. She entered films because of an accident which cut off a promising career in another field. Her first love was athletics, but a major surgical operation put an end to that. She is still running, but towards greater, more challenging goals. She has left the rest of the field far behind — and the tape is near.

Photograph: D. R. Yadav

After the Hat-trick of Council Awards



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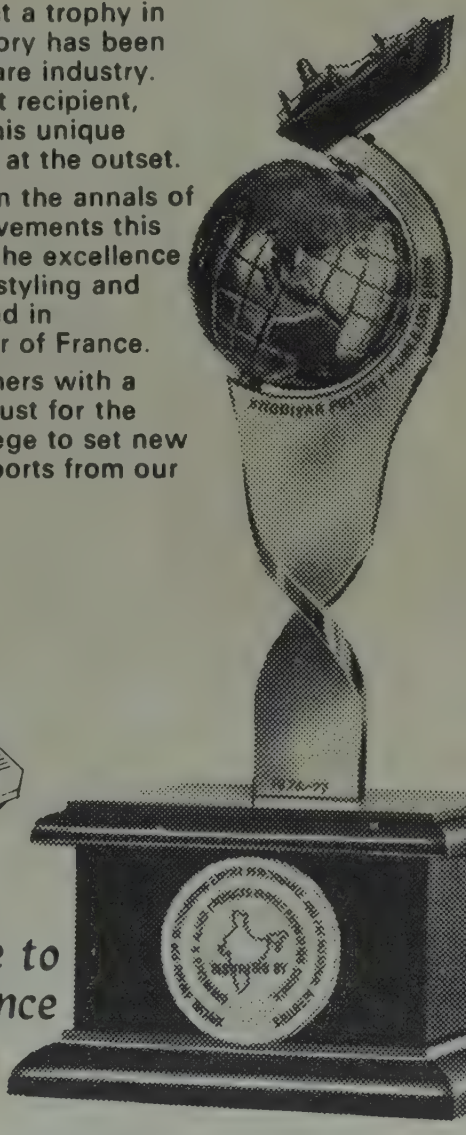

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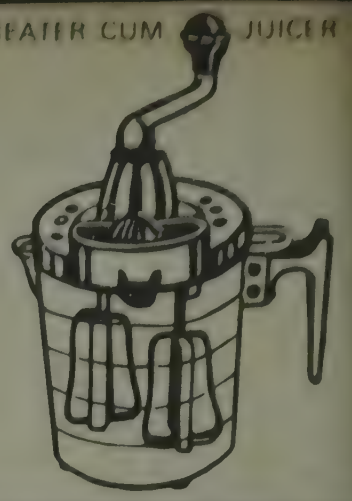
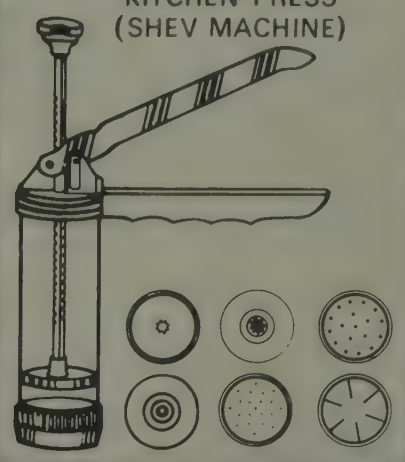
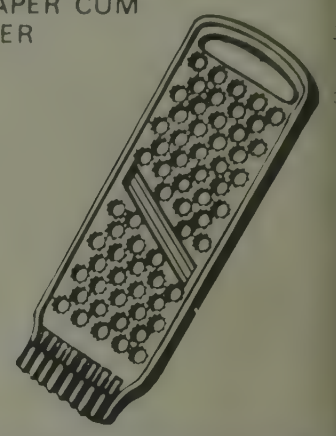


KITCHEN PRESS (SHEV MACHINE)

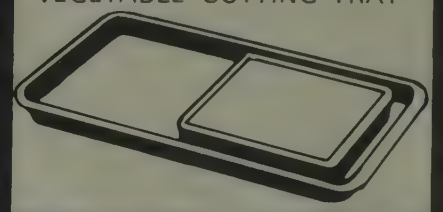


VEGETABLES-FRUITS SCRAPER CUM JUICER



TOMATO SLICER

VEGETABLE CUTTING TRAY

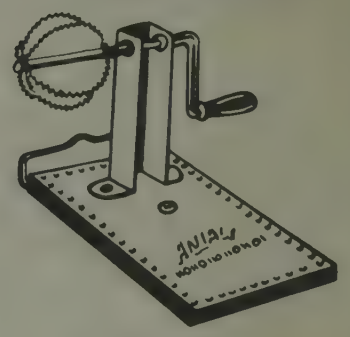


EGG-BEATER

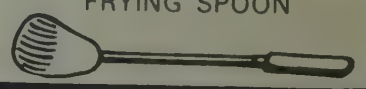
CHILLY CUTTER

CRUSHER (PURAN MACHINE)

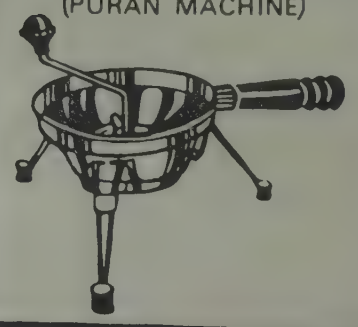
COCONUT SCRAPER



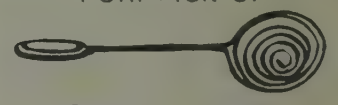
FRYING SPOON



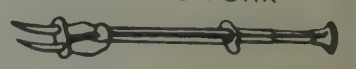
'VIKING' CRUSHER (PURAN MACHINE)



PURI PICK-UP



SERVING FORK



SANDWICH TOASTER

SOLE AGENT

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Mahavir Brothers

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true confession

WAYLAID BY A VAGABOND

The pebble that hit my window didn't make much noise but I got up because I knew he had come. I got out of bed as stealthily as I could and vaulted over the window sill. There was a ledge there and beyond that the pipe. I slid down it till I reached the ground. His voice was hoarse and filled with desire.

"You took so long. I've been here for three whole minutes."

I knew it was not all that long. I had been lying down in jeans and shirt because I hadn't wanted to waste time. The hostel watchman was an old owl, alert at the slightest noise. The dismal walls of the building rose menacingly from where we stood, to the dormitories on the first floor and the class rooms beyond. But they held no threat for me now. I was free of the torment of studies. I turned my back on the depressing walls and put a trembling hand into Alok's palm.

"I can't wait to get away," I said.

"Neither can I," he replied. We walked quickly to a small gap in the barbed wire which he had cut earlier in the day and camouflaged with leaves to make our get-away easier. The road was dark. The town slept. He had parked his scooter a little distance away, he told me.

"Veena," he said suddenly. "You haven't told anybody about your intended escape, have you?"

"Of course not. What do you take me for?"

"I just wondered. If that friend of yours, what's her name . . . the one with the two plaits and pimples?"

"Radha."

"Yes. If she got wise, everything will be up."

"Yes. She's quite a puritan in some respects."

"And you're not," he said, his hands feeling the contours of my body. I brushed them away impatiently.

"Stop it, Alok. The sooner we get away, the better. I don't want to be apprehended here by the hostel warden."

"You're right," he said.

We walked the short distance to the scooter and he kicked it to life.

"Where are we going?"

"A friend's place," he said. "He's loaned me the flat. It belongs to his married sister but she's out of town."

"And when she gets back?"

"Oh, we'll make our own arrangements by then," he replied glibly.

The flat was in quite a posh locality. When he tried the key the door didn't open.

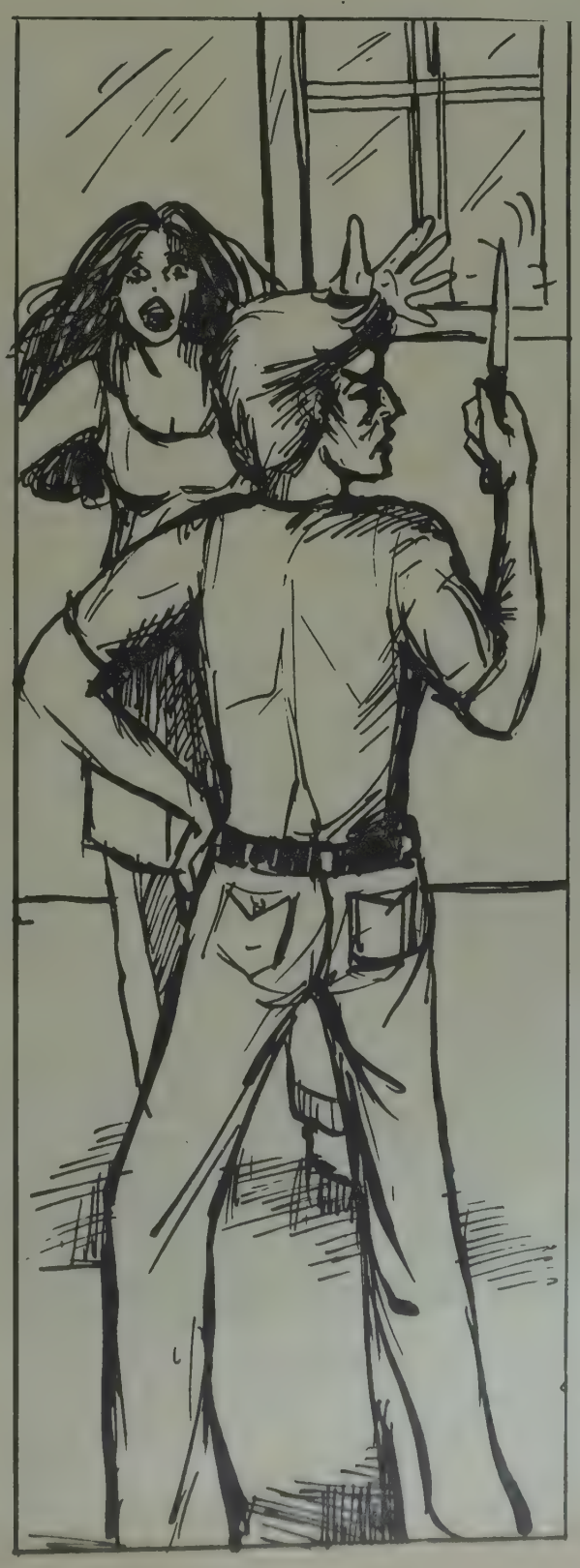
"Damn it. We'll have to break a window pane or something. I think I've got the wrong key."

"You can't do that, Alok. It's housebreaking."

"It isn't. This house belongs to my friend's sister and we have permission to stay here. We're not burglars."

We went around to the back. The tinkle of breaking glass sounded disturbingly loud to my ears. We waited five minutes but there were no shouts. Alok slipped his hand in and undid the window latch. Then he crept in. In a minute he was opening the door for me.

I was emotionally starved, and he was the first man who had shown me any affection. I fell madly in love. Too late I realised that his love was only lust



"Alok," I cried, gripping his arm, "I'm frightened."

"Don't be silly," he said. "Make yourself comfortable, I'll be back."

"Where are you going?" I asked. If he went away and somebody came and caught me inside the house, what explanation would I give?

"I said I'll be back, didn't I? Stop clinging. I hate girls who do that."

I heard the scooter start and rushed to the front door, wondering if he was deserting me already . . . after all those promises of everlasting love. I didn't dare put on the light. I blundered into a sofa and eased myself into it. When I heard a knock on the door five minutes later, I almost jumped out of my skin.

Then I heard his voice. "Alok," I cried and gratefully threw the door open. He came in and closed the door silently.

"Where did you go?" I asked.

"I had to dump the scooter somewhere . . . not too near these premises. I didn't want anybody to get wise."

"But why leave the scooter so far . . . there's plenty of place here."

"Do you want us to land in the lock-up? I stole the scooter."

"You what?"

"It was parked outside an office," he said. "I just took it away. Damn it. I had to have some conveyance to fetch you all the way from that godforsaken hostel! What did you expect us to do? Walk?"

I burst into tears. "Stop crying, Veena," he said with gruff intensity. "I love you." He crushed me in his powerful arms till I cried out. But I was ecstatic. It was what I had been waiting to hear for years. I had hungered for love and affection ever since mother died, leaving me to fend for myself at the tender age of nine. There was father, of course, but he did not seem to feel her loss as intensely as I did, maybe because he hadn't really loved her. She was uneducated and even during her lifetime I got the impression that he was ashamed of her. He hated to take her out to parties and large gatherings, though every other man brought his wife along. She stayed home with me and told me stories and fed me and plaited my long hair till I grew totally dependent on her.

When she fell ill with a fever that raged for weeks, people started to pour into the house. I was neglected and roamed about unkempt getting in everybody's way. Father made endless trips to doctors and specialists but mother began to look paler and thinner as the days passed. One day an ambulance came and they took her away. I ran outside and howled. All this time I had not felt so lost, because though she was bedridden, she was still in the same house and I could see her, hear her voice and run and sit on her bed, when no one was looking. If anybody saw me, they always shooed me away from her room and

Continued on page 51

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WAYLAID BY A VAGABOND

told me I would catch an infection. Sometimes I would watch the tears roll down her cheeks and wonder if she was in great pain.

Now I clung to father and asked where they were taking her.

"To hospital," he said. "She has to have an operation."

"When will she come back?"

"Soon . . . maybe in a fortnight," he said.

It didn't take so long. Two days later I was surprised to find the ambulance back in front of the house. I ran out eagerly.

"Has mother come back?" I asked.

"Yes," said father. But he did not smile.

Why isn't he happy? She was back so soon, too.

But it was different. Mother had come back all right, but she lay still with closed eyes. So many relatives began to pour into the house. They wailed and cried and I walked around bewildered. Finally, they took away mother and the house returned to silence. I never saw her again.

A few months later a sophisticated young lady came to our house. She had painted nails and prim lips. She laughed a lot and invariably had a cigarette in her hand. Soon she became a regular visitor. She would come sometimes in jeans and sometimes in maxi skirts, often in sarees with skimpy blouses.

One day father said, "Veena, how would you like to have a mother?" I could not understand him. He put his arm round the fashionable young lady I had seen so often in our house.

"Shiela and I plan to get married," he said.

I was over ten years old by then and I understood the implications. She would come and live in the house, take away from me whatever little affection I still enjoyed from my father. "I don't want her here," I cried. "I hate her." I felt a sharp, stinging slap. I burst into tears and ran from the room. It was the first time in my life that father had struck me and the totality of that rejection hit me now.

I cried and refused to eat. They left me alone. Finally, when the hunger became too much to bear, I tiptoed to the dining table and sat down without a word. The only result of my tantrum was a cooling of feelings between father and myself.

Now that she was so much a part of the house, I had to tolerate her but I hated it. Father, however, was proud of her. He displayed her to his friends who called to congratulate him. He took her out to parties and films and I was left on my own. I began to grow independent physically, but emotionally there was still a vacuum. I desperately needed someone who loved me, not somebody like Shiela who made pretty talk just to show friends how well the pair of us got on.

I became quite incorrigible. In my early teens, I began to smoke Shiela's cigarettes stealthily. Not that I liked it. It was a kind of rebellion, a ruse for catching father's attention. Once he caught me and punished me by making me skip dinner. But I didn't really mind. I don't think he did either, because the next time I was in their midst he offered me gin.

Gradually I was corrupted by constant contact with high society and cultivated 'sophisticated' habits. But father and Shiela drew the line at going out with boys. They wanted me to have all kinds of freedom in their presence, but be a cloistered being behind their backs. It was a strange conflict and inwardly I resented it. I was growing, and needed an outlet for my passion.

When they sent me away to hostel during my college years, I grew bolder. Occasionally, I would steal out and go to movies with a few of my more brazen friends. During one of these outings, I met Alok who had come there with a crowd of boys. He made overtures to me and I responded. I was emotionally starved and was attracted to the first man who had shown me affection. Our meetings grew more frequent and our ardour too. Soon it was no longer possible to be satisfied with sporadic, stealthy encounters. We had to get away. Alok had told me he was a student but he always seemed to have plenty of money and I surmised he was well off. He never took me to meet his parents. He told me they were in Africa, doing business of some kind.

But now alone in a strange house with him, I was frightened. What if he hadn't got permission to occupy the flat at all? What if there was no friend and no convenient married sister, but they were just made up to deceive me? If he had stolen a scooter, could he not break into a house, too? The knowledge of trespass made me tremble. I drew away from him.

"What's the matter?" he asked.

"Let's get out of here," I cried.

"Don't be silly," he said and now his voice was tender no longer. His grip on my shoulders was fierce. Again I broke away and made for the door but he caught me angrily with a lust which alarmed me.

Too late I realised that what I had mistaken for love was in reality the base lust of a no-good ruffian who made a show of prosperity but stole scooters and broke into houses when he caught hold of a gullible and defenceless girl. I bit him wildly. He released me with a cry of pain. I ran into the bedroom and closed the door on him. I heard him mumble curses but he made no loud noises. Maybe he was afraid of waking the neighbourhood. I heard the back door open and his footsteps receded. I thought he had gone away and heaved a sigh of relief. But peeping out of the bedroom, I saw to my horror that he stood guard outside the window. He had driven out miles to my hostel to fetch me and he did not intend to let me go in a hurry. Panic stricken, I looked around for another avenue of escape. Getting out of the house was my first problem. After that I didn't know how to proceed. I had no money on me, no conveyance of any kind. I was completely at his mercy.

I burst ito tears, groping round the room wildly. I opened the bathroom door. The moonlight streaming through the open grill picked out the telephone in the bedroom. My heart leapt with joy. I picked up the receiver. Dead. He had sensed my intention and cut the line. Maybe that was why he had rushed outside.

He was back inside the house now, rapping on the bedroom door.

"Open the door," he cried. You can't get away." "No," I said. "Go away. I hate you."

But he was on fire. I could hear his heavy breathing on the other side of the door.

"Be reasonable, Veena," he pleaded. "Don't do this to me. I love you."

"You don't," I cried. "You brought me out here with false promises of affection . . . but you're fake . . . a thief and a traitor."

He drew in his breath sharply. I wondered what had scared him, till I saw the head lights in the gloom outside. Somebody was coming. He didn't care for me. Horrified, I heard him shoot the bolt home, locking me in the bedroom. I heard his running footsteps and then there was a loud banging on the front door. I was helpless. There was no avenue of escape. Footsteps came round the house, millions of them it seemed. Actually, there were only three people. The back door was open. Alok had probably gone out that way.

A man's voice said, "They must have got away. I swear I heard sounds, Inspector. So I phoned you . . . the people who stay here have gone away for a week . . . I knew the house was empty."

A sob came out of me unawares.

"Over there," said another voice, probably a constable. "In the bedroom."

"Be careful," said the man who had brought the police out there. "They might be armed."

The door opened and a light was switched on.

"It's a girl," said the police inspector.

His eyes softened when he saw me cringe. I burst into tears.

He put a hand on my shoulder. Don't be afraid," he said softly.

Before I knew what was happening, they had led me outside to the police jeep and we were on our way, my voice trembling as I poured out the whole story of my ill-fated life.

"Please don't tell my father," I pleaded. The jeep drove on.

"Where are you taking me?" I cried.

"Back to the hostel, where you belong."

"You mean, there won't be a case?"

"Not if you promise to help us," he said. "There is a band of ruffians operating in the city, luring girls from respectable homes away to dens of vice. We want to round up the culprits."

"You mean Alok?"

"Yes. He's one of them. We have a description of him and it tallies with what you told us. If he should call again, I want you to inform me at once."

"I will," I said quickly.

Alok never called again. Maybe he got wise to the fact that the police were on his trail. I never ventured out again and adhered rigidly to the hostel regulations. My father and Shiela don't know to this day about my misadventure because the police Inspector held his tongue, true to his promise.

This story is intended to be a warning to other young girls like me who may be lured from the straight path by wild promises of freedom and lasting affection. I was lucky to get away. Others may not be so fortunate.

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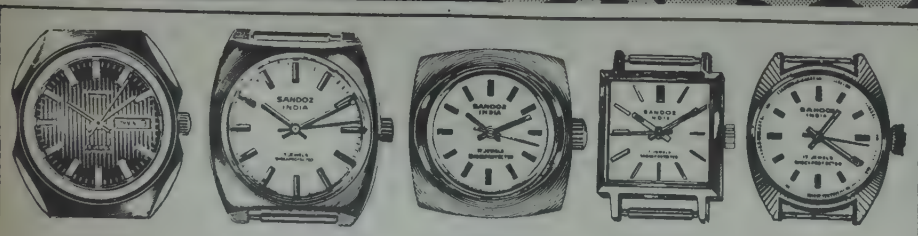

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hi ya honey!

By an Alves called Johnnie

I have worked for well over 20 years for a large, well-organised company on a 9.30 to 5.30 job and I must say that I have enjoyed every moment of it. To the modern generation working eight hours at a stretch is just too much. Reminds me of the union leader who announced, "I am happy to inform you that Management has agreed that we will work only on Wednesdays." Immediately exclaimed a worker, "What! Every Wednesday?"

Females in any office are the lucky employees. Honey, once you join an office, watch out for the Head of Personnel, especially if it's a lady. Miss Groucha makes it her business to be nasty and to to find faults. She walks about the office first thing in the morning, keeping an eye to be certain that other females are not more than 20 seconds late. She mentally calculates the length of the skirt, the shade of the lipstick, and the cut of the low neck, giving nods of approval or disapproval as the case may be. She usually spends long hours in the loo, hoping to overhear gossip or opinions of herself and other bosses.

Whenever a new secretary is required, Personnel will always select the ugliest, believing that she is the most efficient.

ANOTHER HARD DAY IN THE OFFICE, WHAT A GRIND!

Personnel always indulges in economy drives. Ask for a ball point refill, and you will spend more time getting one than using it. One progressive company requires the old refill as proof of its having been used. In my last office we had two types of toilet paper — hard and harder.

Miss Crochetty in the Typing Pool could easily substitute a Sergeant Major on a drill parade. She makes it her business to slave drive the typists under her control, but a bottle of home-made jam or a small "Evening in Paris" could ensure long periods of rest. Better still, seek her advice on a problem of beauty or weight, and you've made a friend for life. Miss Crochetty, in my last office, spent much of her time adjusting her brassiere straps and occasionally pulling a hair in her beard.

Once you get a job, honey, chum up with the well stacked sex-kitten in the office. Some of her popularity will flow on to you. She is generally more busy with young, rich and outgoing males rather than incoming and outgoing mail. Being empty upstairs she is usually employed to do filing, but the only filing she does is of her nails. She is one who knows all the promotions and demotions — facts given to her by executives at clandestine lunch meetings.

Most females, honey, hate to be put in the Typing Pool. I cannot understand why, as most of their time is spent shuffling to and from the toilet. My advice to Efficiency Experts and the Time and Work Study genius is to remove immediately the full length mirror in the ladies' toilet. Making the seating accommodation there uncomfortable will also increase the woman hours in an office.

Talking of time and study, this is one I made of a female steno-typist in the office where I now work.

She arrives at 9.40 dressed to kill, with large goggles, huge beads round her neck, and grumbles about late trains. She leaves her umbrella on the table, immediately disappears into the toilet. At 10 she opens her desk drawer, uncovers the typewriter and tells her neighbours about her son's measles and her husband's drinking habits. She also whispers about Carol's low-neck dress.

At 10.15 she opens the bottom drawer, takes out a plastic bag containing a comfortable pair of shoes, puts them on. At 10.20 coffee break. At 10.40 she types a six-line letter which was given to her on the previous day, grumbling at the speed at which it was dictated. At 11 a.m she goes to a friend on the third floor to discuss a dress pattern, returns at 11.30 and immediately goes to the toilet.

At 12 noon the boss calls her for dictation, and she completes the letter by 1 p.m., grumbling about the boss's mood. 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. lunch break. She returns at 2.15 grumbling about the poor quality of food, and immediately goes to the loo. At 2.30 she keeps looking for the tea man, grumbling that nobody is ever on time.

Rings home at 2.40 to find out if the servant is sleeping. Gives her enough work to keep her busy till she returns home. At 3 p.m. tea arrives. Tea and medu vada vanish by 3.30 p.m. amidst loud chit chat with neighbours, covering prices, fashions and recent pregnancies.

At 3.30 she suddenly remembers she has to buy something from Akbarally's. Returns at 4 p.m. Vanishes to 3rd floor till 4.45, returns, types a letter till 5 p.m., collects her handbag and disappears into the toilet. Returns at 5.20 smelling sweet. Hurries and packs up . Leaves at 5.25. saying, "End of another day. Same old grind."

Until next time then.

frankly speaking

Devi

Ranjeeta Kaur invited the press and a few well-wishers to Little Hut at the Ritz for murgdam (cocktail). This was because her four films in a row had done smashing business but there had not been enough noise about it — "Laila Majnu", "Damaad", "Ankhiyon Ke Jharonkhon Se" and Pati Patni Aur Woh".

When I arrived there the press was almost horizontal and at their abusive best; B. R. Chopra was preparing to leave; R. K. Nayyar kept announcing

MULTI-STAR BEDTIME STORY

that he was leaving; and Rajat Rakshak settled for a glass of whisky, and me. He made no pretence of going going gone.

Ranjeeta cut a tiny cake with a huge knife (some said it was her birthday), and it exhausted her. She sat down tired yet happy that now at last the success of her four films would make some noise.

She looked nice — expressive eyes, compact body wrapped in a white cotton salwar-kameez. She looked like those neat star-hairdressers who always look better than the stars. And Ranjeeta looks better than so many stars. Yet Simple, who doesn't have looks, makes more noise with a single flop release, "Anurodh".

Just when everyone, including Rajat Rakshak, was ready to leave, entered Vidya Sinha. The "Pati Patni. . ." success has got into Vidya's pigments. She is looking as fair as Saira Banu bleached.

* * *

Filmdom's crores are once again locked up in bed. I am not talking of Dharam-Hema or Amitabh-Rekha. Amitabh is in bed with jaundice, Chintu has also been confined to bed for a month with jaundice, Rameshwari is in bed after a nasty fall from a horse at Rajashree's shooting.

Sanjeev is back in bed with an exhausted kidney, Sarika is in bed with appendicitis, Daboo is in bed at Breach Candy to knock off extra kilos, and the tail-end pair of "Mein Tulsi Tere Aangan Ki", Debu Mukherjee and Geeta Behl, are in bed, separately, he with jaundice and she with typhoid.

With all sets dismantled, I think Mushir-Riaz should start shooting for "Rajput" with the three horses who are fit and healthy (and not bony on muhurat day because of unemployment).

people and events

Over 500 girls of Panjab University recently attended ten-day National Service Scheme camps held in various villages and slums, and launched an adult education programme. Picture shows volunteers of Government Home Science College, Chandigarh, teaching flower-making to the girls of Dhanas village, near Chandigarh.

LEFT: Mrs. Pratibha Pawar, wife of Maharashtra's Chief Minister, inaugurating the Burns Clinic of the Round Table in Bombay. Looking on are Mr. Vijay Merchant, Lady Jeejeebhoy, Chairman, Masina Hospital Trust, Mrs. N. Shinde and Dr. H. N. Mohan Rao.

RIGHT: A Healthy Teeth Contest was organised by the Indian Dental Association in Bombay, sponsored by Ciba-Geigy of India. Picture shows Mr. Hashu Advani, Maharashtra's Minister for Urban Development, presenting the trophy to Sister Maggie Vaz of Canossa Convent, the winning school. On the extreme right is Miss Patricia Vaz, one of the winners of the contest.

At the International Congress on "Prevention of Heart Disease and Cardiac Rehabilitation" held recently in Bombay, eminent cardiologist Dr. Lidia F. Nikolaeva from Moscow, is seen addressing the gathering. With her is noted cardiologist Prof. B. K. Goyal.

Mr. Abdullah al-Shubaili, Consul General of Saudi Arabia, and Mrs. al-Shubaili held a function to celebrate the National Day of Saudi Arabia, at the Taj Mahal Hotel, Bombay. Seen on the occasion are (from left) Mrs. M. A. Hamad, wife of the Consul General of Sudan, the hostess, the host and Mrs. S. al-Kassar, wife of the Consul General of Iraq.

ABOVE: The Zonta Club of Bombay One recently celebrated its Charter Anniversary, at the Hotel Nataraj. Seen on the occasion are (from left) Dr. Sita Bilaney, Dr. Tripty Tolat, Mrs. Tannaz Tarapore, Mrs. H. Schoettle, Consul General of the Federal Republic of Germany, who was the chief guest, Miss Katy Bharucha, Mrs. Manju Shah and Mrs. Freny Gimi.

BELOW: "Kaveri Stars" Jaya Bhattacharya and Sunil Kalevar, winners of a beauty contest held at the "Kaveri Day" function organised by the Karnataka Handicrafts Development Corporation, in Bangalore.

bombay

Shivaji Rao and Shalini Devi Holkar (better known as Richard and Sally) formed the Rehwa Society in Maheshwar, M.P., and set up a training-cum-production centre for weaving, with a grant from the Central Welfare Board. The weavers have formed a co-operative and they now plan to export sarees.

The Society held an exhibition-cum-sale (22-27 Oct.) of a wide range of fascinating Maheshwari sarees, at the Taj Mahal Hotel. Weavers were specially brought from Maheshwar to demonstrate their skill.

* * *

"Poompuhar" Tamil Nadu Handicrafts Development Corporation recently held an exhibition of handicrafts at the Coomaraswamy Hall. On view were eye-catching ceramics, bronze figures, brass lamps, stone sculpture, wood carvings, and palm leaf, cane and applique items.

Mr. G. B. Nevalkar, Chairman, Handloom & Handicrafts Corporation of India, inaugurated the exhibition.

The Corporation is playing a vital role in the development of handicrafts and the economic uplift of craftsmen. It has been running training centres for talented craftsmen.

* * *

The Central Bombay Jaycees' III Inter-school Fancy Dress Competition was held recently. It was judged by Mrs. Dhairyabalaben Vora, Mrs. Jyotsnaben Sheth, Mrs. Navaz Karani and Mrs. Pritiben Gandhi.

The 1st prize winners of the two age groups were Atul Vaikul and Alpa Shah. The Outstanding Performance Award went to the Robert Money Technical High School.

delhi

Nirmala Kumar's exhibition of paintings at the Lalit Kala Akademi was attended by many art lovers and patrons of Delhi.

The exhibition was inaugurated by Mrs. O. P. Malhotra, wife of the Chief of the Army Staff.

* * *

"Shatranj" restaurant of Hotel Maurya was the venue for a press conference organised by the Wild Life Society of India. The Wild Life week was organised for raising funds by Hotel Maurya, Air-India and Chanakya theatre. There was a festival of films at the Chanakya, and a Wild Life Ball at Maurya, who were the hosts; Air-India provided the air passages. The press conference centred around Richard Roth, producer of Julia, the most talked about film. Mr. Roth said he was keen to do his best for Wild Life fund raising campaigns.

madras

The Board of Directors of Travel Air Ltd., Bangalore, held a function at Hotel Chola to mark the inauguration of their Madras Branch Office. Miss P. T. Saraswathy, Tamil Nadu's Minister for Social Welfare, declared the office open. Mr. C. K. Duraivelan, President, Southern Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, presided over the function. Earlier, Mr. Nagaraja Gupta welcomed the gathering.

Travel Air has introduced a scheme of taking a group of a hundred tourists to the Far East for a low payment of Rs. 250 per month for 20 months.

* * *

The Leo Club of Cathedral, Madras, sponsored by the Lions Club of Ambattur held their charter celebrations at the World University Service hall. A souvenir "Leo Wave" was released on the occasion. Among the projects taken up by the enthusiastic young Leos are the Bala Vihar and the Friend in Need Society. Mr. Ganesh Kumar is the President of the Club.

bangalore

The Army Officers' Wives Association conducted a course in Ikebana, in collaboration with the Indo-Japanese Association. Mrs. Lakshmi Bhattacharji conducted the classes. Twenty-two women qualified to receive the Ikebana certificates. These were presented by Mrs. Shakuntala Balu at a function held at the Officers' Club, where on view was an exhibition of flower arrangements.

* * *

The Karnataka Handicrafts Development Corporation organised a fashion parade and beauty contest in connection with their "Kaveri Day". The models for the fashion show included a few film stars of Karnataka.

Mrs. Jaya Bhattacharya and Mr. Sunil Kalevar were chosen the "Kaveri Stars" at the beauty contest. They received a gold medal and Rs. 1,000 each from Mrs. S. M. Yahya, wife of the Finance Minister of Karnataka. Mr. S. M. Yahya was chief guest.

ahmedabad

Sita Sreedharan gave a lovely Mohini Attam performance as part of the Onam celebrations organised by the Ahmedabad Kerala Samajam.

The programme included the traditional Kaikottikali and the Kummi dances of Kerala, peasant dances, a ballet depicting the legend behind Onam, mimicry and songs.

Mr. P. G. Mavlankar was chief guest.

* * *

Harshida Rawal and her husband Janardan Rawal presented an evening of songs "Sugam Sangeet" under the auspices of the Ahmedabad Konkani Association. Harshida has been awarded the State Award for the best playback singer in Gujarati films. The Rawals were ably supported by Praswan Chaudhari on the guitar and Shyamsundar Brambhatt on the tabla.

* * *

Mrs. Sushilaben Mehta, Mrs. Hiraben Mehta and Mrs. Induben Bhagwandas were among the ten artistes felicitated by the Gujarat Nritya Natya Academy of Youth Services and the Cultural Activities Directorate, at a function in Ahmedabad.

Mr. Popatlal Vyas, Gujarat Minister for Cultural Affairs, who was chairman of the function, presented a shawl and a certificate to the artistes.

pune

Mario Miranda delighted the members of the University Women's Asociation of Pune by illustrating various types of cartoons, in his talk on "The World of Cartoonists" at St. Vincent's School. He was wildly applauded.

Earlier, Dr. Prabha Deodhar, President of the UWA, welcomed Mario Miranda and Mrs. Ratna Khemani introduced him.

ootacamund

The Madras Chamber Orchestra gave an inspired performance of classical and light music, under the auspices of the Indo-German Friendship Society, at Anandagiri. The highlights of the performance, which extended over two days, were selections from Tchaikovsky, Mozart, Paganini and Richter.

CHILDREN! A Special Contest For You!

Do you know that 1979 is a year especially for you? It is the "International Year of the Child," and all over the world people will be working to make this world a better place for you.

Many of you are lucky — you have loving parents and a house and food to eat and clothes to wear and so many other things.

But you know, don't you, that millions of children in India are not so lucky? Have you ever thought what it would feel like to be hungry all the time or to have to sleep on the pavements or to be cold on a winter night because your clothes are torn? Many children in India don't have clean water to drink or to have a bath in. They have to beg because their parents don't have money to give them. They can't afford to go to school and sometimes there are no schools where they live and sometimes they have to work during the day. If they are sick, they don't have the money to see a doctor or to buy medicines and sometimes there are no doctors or hospitals where they live.

We would like you to think about all this and look around you and see how many children in India live.

Then we would like you to join our contests.

ESSAY CONTEST

Choose one of the following subjects:

"A Day In My Life As A Beggar Child"
or
"My Servant's Children"

Age Group: 6 — 10 years
Length: 150 words
Deadline: November 15, 1978

DRAWING CONTEST

Draw a little child you have seen who has to work for a living (e.g. a shoeshine boy, a newspaper vendor, a peanut vendor, a sweets-vendor, a carpolish boy, a lottery-ticket seller, etc.)

Age Group: 6 — 10 years
Deadline: November 15, 1978

WIN ATTRACTIVE PRIZES!

this week for you

IF IT'S YOUR BIRTHDAY THIS WEEK:

A very lucky year for romance, money, your job interest. An exciting one too: your plans will succeed beyond your greatest expectations. A time of new beginnings, with the new moon dominating your birthday chart. Welcome changes; these can only benefit you. There will be plenty of social activity and new friends will be lucky to you, giving you practical help and advice as well as happy companionship. This time next year you should have improved your status, be better off financially. It's a blissful scene for your love life, whether married or single. Should there have been problems with youngsters in the recent past, you'll find yourself in tune with them this year.

For the week Oct. 29-Nov. 4, 1978

John Naylor

ARIES (Mar. 22 — Apr. 20)

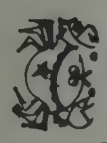
You will have plenty of time to please yourself this week; life will be more tranquil now. Offer the olive branch if you have quarrelled with someone seriously. Should you need help or encouragement for a scheme you will get it easily. An unusual opportunity may arise, thus throwing you into a new scene.

TAURUS (Apr. 21 — May 21)

The influence of Venus could upset your usually excellent judgement, especially financially. It is not a good time to spend on personal good or to alter your appearance; you probably won't make the right choice. Take a more carefree view of life and people, but make a fuss of your man.

GEMINI (May 22 — June 21)

Mars and Mercury move into opposition to your sign mid-week, for quite a lengthy period. You will have a busy, changeable period, when people won't be too reliable. Stay adaptable but get organised. Arrangements will be altered, however. Find time for love and the social scene or you will get tense.



CANCER (June 22 — July 23)

Should you have been thinking of a change at home or at work, it is a good week for getting plans into shape, for putting out feelers. If single, you will meet attractive members of the opposite sex in an outdoor activity or at a party. In fact, the accent is on romance and happy social occasions until the new year.

LEO (July 24 — Aug. 23)

You are influenced by lucky and lively stars over a long period so don't hold back if there is something special you want to do. New possibilities in friendships this week and your love life should be rewarding. There is promise of extra money too; you could treat yourself to a minor luxury.

VIRGO (Aug. 24 — Sept. 23)

Fresh contacts will be lucky to you, so will travel, unfamiliar places and activities. Go for the new and novel, be a little bolder in everything. It is a week to get out and around, to explore and inquire. A new romance will begin suddenly, probably while you are with a group of friends.

LIBRA (Sept. 24 — Oct. 23)

A splendid week for money matters — for spending and for saving; your ideas are sound. There will be new romantic opportunities for some weeks to come, with one special reunion. Yet, don't be too eager to drift back into the past; the future looks bright. If a social date is postponed, this will somehow benefit you.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24 — Nov. 22)

Any form of communication will be lucky to you, aiding your hopes and wishes. The past several weeks have been very busy but, as November begins, so the pace eases. Keep up to date on the essentials. This way you'll have more time for friendships and the lighter side of life.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23 — Dec. 22)

Mars, that fiery and ardent planet, in your sign is a splendid portent for your main hopes and ambitions, gifting you with energy and confidence. Make the most of your chances in all directions. If heart-free, an attractive newcomer could sweep you off your feet. Anyway, life will be adventurous.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 23 — Jan. 20)

Enjoy the social distractions that offer, the pleasant and flattering attention, the intriguing flirtations. Relax and spoil yourself. Your position, generally, and your finances, in particular, should be much improved. In a few weeks' time, dynamic stars will be aiding your aims and ambitions, and also your love life.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 — Feb. 19)

If you are getting ahead with Christmas preparations, and especially those gifts you have to buy, this is fine, allowing you to economise and choose at leisure. If you have not been short of money recently, you will be soon, so plan ahead with this in mind. This week marks the start of a happy new cycle in friendships and social life.

PISCES (Feb. 20 — Mar. 21)

If you have a special plan, hope or ambition, push on with it without delay; have confidence and you will succeed. The first part of the week is good for buzzing around and getting things done, for exploring fresh avenues of contact, for considering new ideas. Life will be busy, carefree, and with some pleasing surprises.

next week

Eve's Weekly

ISSUE OF NOVEMBER 4, 1978

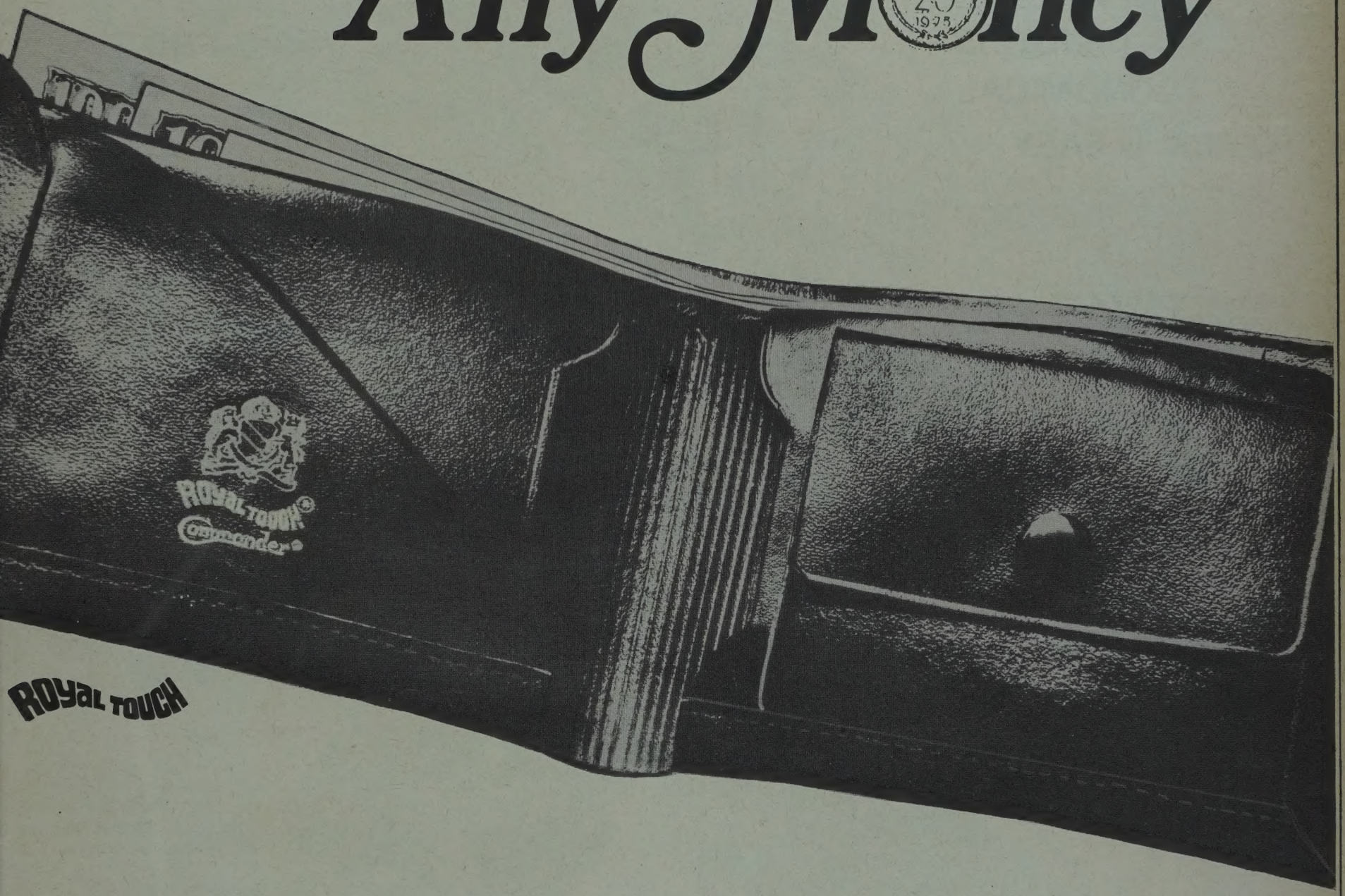
SWAYAMVARA

A relatively recent phenomenon in Bombay, Swayamvara is a weekly, organised meeting where unmarried men and women come together for the specific purpose of choosing a marriage partner. An eye-witness account of what happens at these get-togethers and conversations with the organisers as well as some of the participants.

THE GARLAND CANAL SCHEME

It seems a pity that a well thought out, detailed and apparently workable plan for the eradication of some of the major problems that beset India perennially — floods, drought and power-shortage, for example — is lying forgotten in some governmental drawer. An account of Dinshaw J. Dastur's plan.

Ask Any Money



Ask a 100 Rupee note how comfortably he lies in my pocket. Ask a 10 paisa coin how his flowered edges are safe in my coin bag, or ask the bank cheque who never gets a fold in his belly.

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